WALSALL
CHRONICLE

Thursday, January 1, 2015 | Read by more than 70,000 people | Price when sold 50p

SIGN TO TARGET SPEEDING CARS

IMPROVEMENTS are to be carried out along main routes in Walsall, including a new Watchman speed sign under £180,000 plans.

Walsall Council is earmarking work along the A34 Birmingham Road and Caldmore Road as part of new funding proposals put forward. But plans for a car park in Lucknow Road, Willenhall, have been dropped to enable the two other projects to go-ahead.

by Craig Hughes

Watchman signs, which can flash up a drivers' registration number or the speed limit of the road, are planned along the Birmingham Road which runs between Walsall town centre towards Great Barr.

There are also moves to extend the central reservation.

Transport chief, Councillor Lee Jeavons, said: "There is an ongoing need to address the road safety and traffic management issues on both Birmingham Road and Caldmore Road.

Concentrate

"To be frank, there is a greater need to concentrate our diminishing resources on improving the safety of road users in these areas, instead of creating a new car park.

"There have been a number of serious collisions on the A34 and this scheme will see us extending the central reservation and implementing a Watchman sign to reduce the speed of motorists.

"We will also look to address the traffic flow and parking issues in Caldmore Road."

It has been agreed by the council, with a report stating the new scheme aims to address 'high priority traffic management and road safety matters.'

Around £168,000 had been allocated for a new 18-space car park at Lucknow Road, Willenhall, as part of the capital programme. But the money saved from not going through with the scheme, and an underspend on the conversion of grass verges into more than 40 parking bays around the borough, is also going towards the costs.

A petition containing more than 1,000 signatures was previously submitted in favour of plans to use a grassed area in front of shops in Lucknow Road for parking. The scheme aimed to reduce illegal parking and other issues near to the junction of Lucknow Road and Pool Hayes Lane.

Willenhall councillor Ian Shires said it was a blow to the area that the scheme would no longer go ahead. "Matters just continue to get worse, the traffic through that junction has increased dramatically," he said.

"The plan was trying to keep the businesses popular." The Watchman signs have been used in a bid to slow down drivers on major routes. Roads involved in the scheme are the Broadway, Sutton Road and Northgate in Aldridge.

Union J boys flag up their fans' devotion

X Factor boyband Union J with the Willenhall flag when they visited the town's Morrisons store to meet the fans

SELFIES and signings were on the shopping list for the hundreds of fans who queued all day at a Morrisons store to get a few seconds with their favourite boy band Union J.

The X Factor stars were at the supermarket in Willenhall to sign copies of their new single You Got It All.

The four-strong band chatted with crowds of hysterical fans.

The signing was one of 17 in Morrisons stores across the country, and the fourth the boys completed in one day alone, having visited fans in Leeds, Huddersfield and Stoke before greeting the Black Country crowd at 7.30pm. The two-hour signing was extended so as not to disappoint more than 500 fans who camped out to meet the boys Josh Cuthbert, JJ Hamblett, Jaymi Hensley and George Shelley.

Armed with hot drinks and duvets, fans began queuing up to 11 hours before the boys were due to arrive. Grabbing their spot at the front were a group of friends from Willenhall.

Chloe Young, aged 16 and her six pals, some of whom met each other at a concert, waited in line from 8.30am.

The superfan said: "To keep ourselves entertained we have taken lots of selfies and played games. I have queued for over 100 hours to meet them, this is the sixth time and I have seen them perform 10 times. JJ gave me a hug and a kiss, I love them."

The fans were allowed in to the store in groups of 30 but a strict time was placed on the meet and greet.

Paige Eggleton, 17, from Leamore said: "They are my favourite band, we just had to be first to meet them, we couldn't wait." Her sister Harleigh Eggleton, 15, added: "It was amazing, they are so nice to their fans."

Union J will be performing on their first arena tour as support for The Vamps next year.

Subsidy decision defended by chiefs

WALSALL'S social care chief has defended a decision by the council to reduce a subsidy that will mean almost 20,000 hard-up householders will have to pay increased council tax.

The discount scheme is aimed at people on low incomes, who can claim a reduction in the amount of council tax they pay.

Cabinet said it has been forced to review the terms and conditions of the scheme in light of reduced funding from central Government and the council's financial position.

The recommendation will now go before full council on January 12.

If approved, the changes will come into effect in April, affecting 19,600 people.

Social care boss, councillor Diane Coughlan said: "It is with regret that we are recommending that working age customers, who are eligible for council tax support, are given a maximum discount of 75 per cent rather than the full 100 per cent which is currently the case.

"The picture is the same across the country.

"Out of 326 local authorities in England, 281 of them have been forced to reduce their council tax support scheme because of cuts from central Government."

● Families – See Page 3

20 jobs due at new store

A NEW convenience store could open in Bloxwich creating up to 20 jobs, under new plans.

NewRiver Retail wants to launch the shop next to the Bell Inn pub. The pub in Bell Lane will remain open although the beer garden will be reduced to enable the car park to be shared.

The applicants said: "The principal of the proposed layout is very simple, and has been developed so as to allow the existing pub to remain and to continue to function successfully."

£160,000 spent on clearing rubbish

AROUND £160,000 has been spent on clearing up fly-tipping across Walsall since April, latest figures have revealed.

Cash-strapped Walsall Council has been hit with the bill for dealing with dumped rubbish which creates an eyesore in the borough.

A total of £159,206 was spent between April and November. If the trend continues the amount spent is poised to be higher than the £206,311 spent during the previous financial year.

It comes after a man was taken to court and hit with a bill of more than £800 after bed mattresses, cushions and electrical goods were dumped.

They were scattered around Rayboulds Bridge Road, Walsall, in February and the culprit was captured by cameras which had been put there by council environmental health officers.

The 29 year-old from Beechdale admitted depositing controlled waste and was fined £290, ordered to pay prosecution costs of £500 and a £29 victim surcharge at Walsall Magistrates Court.

Community and leisure chief, councillor Khizar Hussain, said: "Fly-tipping is irresponsible and is something the council is committed to stamp out."

Taxi phone fiddle alert

A WOMAN conned a resident into giving her money for a taxi in Walsall, prompting a police warning.

Officers are urging businesses and householders in Birchills to be on their guard after a woman in her 40s asked a resident if she could use a phone to call for a taxi, then asked for cash towards the fare.

She was given £7 but when the phone was checked, the number called was not a taxi firm. Anyone with information should call 101.

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Brum house prices on the increase

HOUSE prices in Birmingham have grown at a faster rate than those in London in recent months, property analyst Hometrack has reported.

Values in the city recorded a 0.6 per cent uplift in the three months to November. Homes in Brum have an average value of £134,300, marking a year-on-year increase of £8,200, according to the report.

London property prices increased by 0.5pc in the three months to November, slowing from average quarterly increases of 1.4pc seen in the capital over the last year.

Despite the recent cooldown in the London market, average property values in the capital have leapt by nearly £57,000 over the last year, which the report said is almost twice the UK's average income.

Prices have increased in London at the same rate over the last quarter as they have in Manchester, Portsmouth and Belfast, which also recorded 0.5 per cent growth.

Liverpool has recorded the smallest increase in property values over the last year, with a rise of just over £3,000, taking the average house price there to £107,000. London property prices now stand at £403,200 typically. Compared with the previous peak of the market in 2007, London, Cambridge and Oxford have seen the biggest uplifts, with house prices in these cities now sitting at 30.5pc, 28.7pc and 21.9pc above their pre-financial crisis highs respectively. Richard Donnell, research director at Hometrack, said the slowdown in London will act as a drag on the rate of house price growth across the UK in 2015.

90,000 fall in visitors to borough's libraries

ALMOST 90,000 fewer people have visited libraries in Walsall within four years, it has emerged.

It comes as cash-strapped Walsall Council is looking to close eight libraries by 2017 in a bid to save more than £500,000. There were 1,222,649 visitors to buildings across the borough in 2010/11 compared to 1,134,465 in 2013/14, figures have revealed.

In total there were just over 88,000 fewer people who attended libraries, of which half are now at risk under budget proposals.

Those earmarked to shut are Pheasey, Streetly, Beechdale, South Walsall in Delves, and Walsall Wood next year.

Then three others in Blakenall, New Invention and Rushall are earmarked to close in the the following 12 months.

This is despite both Pheasey and New Invention seeing a rise in the number of visitors during the last year.

Campaigners in both Pheasey and Streetly launched separate petitions against the proposals and more than 3,500 combined added their names.

However, a public meeting at the Central Library over the controversial cuts was attended by just three people. Seating for more than 50 people had been set up in anticipation of a crowd on December 13.

People were advised to book in advance of the meeting because of the expected high turn-out over plans to close half the borough's libraries.

The meeting, which went ahead regardless, was delayed for 20 minutes to allow for late arrivals. Despite this, other drop-in events have taken place around the borough. Council bosses have insisted there has been no final decision over the budget, which includes a raft of cuts to save £29m next year.

Pay dispute at Caparo is settled

WORKERS at an historic Darlaston screw factory will not take industrial action after settling their pay dispute with bosses.

Staff at Caparo Atlas Fastenings Ltd, in Heath Road, held a strike ballot after claims the management withdrew a two per cent offer earlier this year.

The matter has now been resolved after the company agreed to the award.

Unite the union's regional officer Caroline Crolley said: "Since the members voted by 98 per cent to take industrial action, the company has put back the two per cent offer on the table, back dated to January 2014.

"We ran a second ballot on that offer and our members have accepted.

"It has taken 12 months to reach agreement.

"I'm hoping that in the New Year both sides will sit down and hold talks to agree the 2015 offer early on."

The factory is more than 120 years old and manufactures metal fixings for a number of sectors of industry, from automotive to petrochemical.

Caparo Atlas Fastenings Ltd which is among the UK's largest fastenings producers has declined to comment.

The last dance for committee

Hazel and Graham Jones at the last ever Pelsall charity committee dance

A GROUP which has been raising money for hospitals by holding ballroom and sequence dance events for 40 years has held its last ever dance.

The Pelsall Kidney Machine & Research Committee has been raising funds for Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital and Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth since the 1970s. The last dance evening was staged before Christmas, with organisers admitting it was the right time to stop, particularly as fewer regulars attended the events.

Committee secretary Freda Taylor, from Pelsall, who has been with the group for 38 years, said: "I remember how I first got involved. A friend of mine was part of the group already and would go around handing out raffle tickets to raise money to buy machines for the units at the Queen Elizabeth. I said I would like to get involved and she said 'I will bring you a couple of books' and I said that I would need more than that. It sort of went from there," she said.

The committee, which also consisted of Mrs Taylor's husband Walter, held the dance evenings, which would also include a raffle and a tombola, for the QE before moving to New Cross in Wolverhampton around 15 years ago.

In total for New Cross the committee has raised almost £75,000 since 1999. The final event at Wombourne Civic Centre on December 18, raised £6,000, collected by Dr Maurice Jackson from New Cross.

New youth church to be set up at centre

AS one chapter closes at an historic Walsall chapel, another opens – with the launch of a new youth church that is aimed to change its fortunes.

When the 100-year-old St James Church, in Bloxwich, shut last summer after attendance dwindled – parish leaders decided not to sell up, but to take a leap of faith and create a worship centre aimed at the teens and young adults. The premises is to reopen with a focus on the 13s to 25s age group.

The site, in Old Lane, is being given a facelift and a specialist team will lead services and projects that will be held there. Team Rector the Rev Roger Williams said there is a large population of young people in the town and the vision was to find new ways of serving them.

Parish staff based at All Saints' Church in nearby High Street already work with schools and families in the area, and the existing informal ReNew afternoon service there attracts younger worshippers.

"We have a core group of about 10 people aged in their 20s who will help to get the youth church up and running. The nearest secondary schools are really helping," he added.

Advice for the elderly

ADVICE is being offered on keeping elderly people warm in their homes over winter.

Lichfield District Strategic Partnership has launched its Keep Warm it's Winter pack that offers information on eating well, keeping active and community meals. The leaflets also give advice on money and debt, home adaptations and looking out for neighbours.

The pack is free and available on request from Lichfield District Council's Frog Lane reception, GP surgeries, pharmacies and from community groups.

Talk of the towns

A TALK on the medieval Black Country will be taking place on Monday. Former archaeologist Mike Shaw hosts a Tale of Three Towns at Walsall Local History Centre in Essex Street, from 7.30-9pm. Admission is £2 and for more information call 01922 721305.

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Museum artefacts may go in storage

HISTORIC artefacts and collections will be mothballed into storage if an under-threat museum is closed to save up to £70,000.

Walsall Museum has been earmarked to shut under a raft of measures to save the cash-strapped council up to £29m in the next 12 months.

There are long-term plans to create a £6m heritage centre in Walsall which will combine the museum with the Local History Centre and Walsall Leather Museum.

Once the museum in Lichfield Street closes the likes of the Hodson Shop's collection of working clothes starting from the 1920s face being kept in storage.

The same as the Bayards Colts, a collection of clubs which were carried behind the Mayor in ceremonial processions and civic occasions which are at least 300 years old.

A report from the council, as part of the draft budget, states: "This proposal to save £70,000 will mean the closure of Walsall Museum to the public and the mothballing of its collections in storage.

"All access to the artefacts and informal learning opportunities offered from the museum will cease."

Honours for paramedics

AMBULANCE paramedic graduates from across the region received university honours at ceremonies in their honour.

Seventy graduates from around the West Midlands were given the awards.

This year has seen the largest recruitment drive by the service with over 300 new frontline staff joining up.

Another drive for 300 student paramedics has just been launched

In one week alone the NHS Jobs website has received 7,583 views and 228 applications.

Park openings

OPENING hours at parks across Walsall are to increase again this month. They will be extended until 4.30pm. Hours will then be until 5.30pm in February and 6.30pm in March. The longest times gates are open are in June and July until 9.30pm.

World Cup and star deaths top Google list

THE most searched for items on Google this year have been revealed - with the World Cup in Brazil topping the list for the West Midlands. The internet giant has revealed what the region was searching for throughout 2014.

And other than the World Cup, people most commonly used the search-engine to reflect on the passing of some of the planet's biggest celebrities. Robin Williams and Peaches Geldof were among the top 10 most searched for terms across Wolverhampton, Walsall and Dudley. Oscar-winning actor Williams – famous for films including Good Morning Vietnam and Good Will Hunting – committed suicide at his California home in August.

And TV presenter Geldof – the daughter of Live Aid founder Bob Geldof – died in April. An inquest later ruled she died of a heroin overdose. The deaths of actress Lynda Bellingham and comedians Rik Mayall and Joan Rivers were also among the most searched for items in the West Midlands. Tech heads in Wolverhampton were keen to find out about the iphone6 which was launched in September, making it the fourth most searched item in the city.

In Walsall there was significant interest in the missing Malaysia plane MH370 which disappeared en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing, making 'missing plane' the seventh most Googled term.

There were plenty in Dudley who wanted to find out if they had hit the jackpot, with 'Euromillions results' in second place behind the World Cup. Other popular searches included Jennifer Lawrence, Michael Schumacher, Fargo and Manchester United.

Stephen Rosenthal, from Google UK, said: "Google's Year in Search gives us the best snapshot of what moved, inspired, shocked and intrigued us in 2014. With so many of us now having multiple computers, phones and tablets immediately to hand, these results are the most accurate and comprehensive collection of what the UK's been talking about this year."

Council tax rise for hard-up families as subsidy to go

ALMOST 20,000 hard-up householders in Walsall will have to pay increased council tax after borough bosses voted to reduce their subsidy.

The move has been slammed by independent councillor Pete Smith who called it 'an unwelcome Christmas present' for the poorest and most vulnerable residents in the borough.

The discount scheme is aimed at people on low incomes, who can claim a reduction in the amount of council tax they have to pay. But council chiefs say they cannot afford to continue their current level of support.

The cabinet has chosen to reduce the subsidy by 25 per cent, the highest of the four options put out to public consultation and the least popular with residents. It will mean a weekly increase of £5.03 for households in band A; £5.87 for band B and £6.70 for those in band C.

Those who were previously exempt from paying council tax because of low income will now have to contribute. The move, to be introduced in April, will affect 19,600 people.

Council leader Sean Coughlan blamed the decision on the 'onslaught' of austerity measures introduced by the coalition government. He said: "It is with regret that we do this but the blame should lie with Parliament and not with this authority."

By Marion Brennan

Councillor Diane Coughlan, a benefits assessor for Wolverhampton Council, said: "I deal with these cases in my job every day, and it's heartbreaking. This has not been an easy decision."

Councillor Pete Smith argued the Labour-run council should refuse to accept the cuts. In a joint statement with councillors Chris and Paul Bott, also independents, they said: "The cabinet's decision is an unwelcome Christmas present for low-income households already struggling to make ends meet.

"The previous Conservative-led council administration had protected them from these extra charges for the last two years, yet paradoxically Labour is willing to do what their predecessors would not do and hit over 19,000 already cash strapped households with further bills.

The new leadership should bow its head in shame."

Tram fares to go up 5pc

TRAM fares will increase by around five per cent. Transport firm National Express West Midlands is bringing in the price rises.

An adult single has gone up by 10p with returns going up 20p or 30p, depending on how far people are travelling, meaning the most expensive return fare will be £6.

Weekly and monthly passes have also gone up with a four-week Metrocard now costing £65.50, up £2.

Volunteers breathe new life into garden

Princes Trust Team Leaders Helen Fenton, left, and Irma Bajramovicwith school pupils and the volunteers

A GROUP of dedicated young adults helped breathe new life into a nursery garden.

Twelve volunteers aged between 16 and 25 spent the week working tirelessly to renovate the environmental garden at Ogley Hay Nursery School, Brownhills.

The group were part of the City of Wolverhampton College's Princes Trust programme.

The 12-week programme gives youngsters the chance to improve their confidence and self-esteem, make new friends and learn new skills through a range of outdoor activities, community activities and work experience.

Margaret Turley, headteacher at Ogley Hay, said: "I was really impressed with this wonderful group of young people.

"They dedicated their entire week to improving our garden and were always so mindful of the children.

"They would start working on something and be discussing with each other whether it would be safe for the little ones or look at things they could do to enhance our children's enjoyment of the garden.

"I think young people can get a lot of bad press but this group were a great example that plenty others should follow, they were a credit.

"Everyone here is so happy with what they have done."

The group chose to get involved with the Ogley Hay project after viewing the garden and weighing up the cause against other community projects.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Store staff raise £4,000 for charity

SAINSBURY'S staff have raised £4,020 for Cancer Research UK.

The store in Oldbury has been fundraising for the charity since 2013.

Manager, Mark Hankin said staff had worked together to raise the cash.

He added: "It's been fantastic to see the way everyone's pulled together since we started working with Cancer Research UK.

"We've enjoyed coming up with ways to support and volunteer for this very worthy cause and it's great to think that we're making a positive difference."

Jewellery store to open at mall

A MAJOR jeweller is to open at Walsall's Saddlers Centre, under expansion plans. F Hinds will add to existing jewellers such as Goldsmiths and Warren James, in the centre. It comes as Topland which owns the centre hopes to develop a food store.

Bosses at F Hinds said they are looking forward to establishing itself in the town. Steve Pope, group director at Topland, said: "The Saddlers is bucking the national and regional footfall trends."

Road closures for group march

A SERIES of road closures will be in force in Walsall during a march by Pakistan Muslim Welfare Association.

Side roads will be closed as the procession travels along Birchills Street, Blue Lane West, Green Lane, Old Birchills, Pargeter Street, Wolverhampton Road, Raleigh Street and Jessel Road onSunday. It is expected to start at midday and be finished by 1.30pm.

Toy fair to be held at leisure centre

COLLECTORS of toys and trains will gather for a fair in the Black Country on Sunday. It takes place from 10.30am to 3pm at Oak Park Leisure Centre, Lichfield Road, Walsall Wood.

It costs £1.50 for adults, £1.20 for pensioners and 60p for children. Email transtar@talk21.com or call 01922 643385 for details.

Mistletoe talk

A TALK on 'mistletoe, myths and legends' takes place at Streetly Horticultural Society on Tuesday. Dr Michael Jones will speak at Streetly Community Centre, Foley Road East,, from 7.45-9.15pm.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

OUT walking, we stopped at the local corner shop for some traditional sweets to keep the chill at bay. Back in pre-decimal times did any of us, in our wildest dreams, imagine that one day we would pay 12 shillings for a bag of herbal tablets?

MORE horrors of inflation. At an English Heritage shop I found a penny whistle for £15.

LIVE coverage 24/7. Instant replays of the action. In-depth analysis by ex-SAS types. Terrorism experts describing exactly how stun grenades are used. The coverage of the Australian cafe siege was fascinating for viewers. But let's not deny that it was also a priceless training aid for any terrorists planning something similar.

THE most important thing, declared one earnest radio reporter, was not to make any assumptions in the early stages of the hostage crisis. There seemed a desperate, politically-correct desire to avoid mentioning Muslims or Islamic terrorism. But when a wild-eyed bearded man with a black bandana unfurls a black flag covered with Islamist slogans in Sydney, I think we can safely assume it's not Ned Kelly.

ON several occasions the TV cameras had a clear view of Man Haron Monis. Police snipers could presumably have had the same view. The civilised Western response to such incidents is to avoid using force until mass murder seems imminent. Maybe it's time for a new strategy: if you have a clear shot, take it.

IN the aftermath, poor Australia should not be beating itself up over why a deranged Islamist with a string of convictions was at liberty. There is only one perfect, proven system for spotting lone loonies doing something manic. It is called hindsight.

USEFUL winter tips from my insurance company, telling us what to do if the pipes freeze and burst. "Check for bulges in the ceilings of rooms beneath the burst pipe, indicating trapped water. Place a bucket underneath the bulge and puncture it to control the drain." I remember my father doing exactly that one hard winter. He punctured the ceiling, the water burst through, there was a huge flash-bang and the Old Man fell off his step-ladder. Moral: if you must puncture the ceiling, use something sensible. Not an electric drill.

AND off to yet another funeral and another buffet of plates overflowing with black pudding, sausage rolls and ham sandwiches. Why is it that when a human dies the pigs suffer?

WE went to a Christmas performance of The Messiah. It is usually an uplifting event but I found it hard to concentrate on Handel's soaring celebration of "God upon his great white throne," the God of Abraham and Moses, without thinking of the unspeakable evil committed, only a few hours earlier in Sydney and Pakistan, in the name of the same God. Religions preach division, separation and supremacy. We are the blessed, the chosen ones or the followers of the true prophet and all the others are heathens, heretics, goyim, kuffir or the wrong sort of Muslim. The divisive creed of Them and Us is not an unfortunate side-effect of religions but their defining message. It is bizarre, in a modern society founded on the belief that all people are created equal, that we allow the preaching of such stuff in the name of "faith" and then throw up our hands in horror at the images from a school in Peshawar or a cafe in Sydney.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Delay over choice of Tory safe seat

THE Tories have had to delay the selection of a candidate to replace long serving MP Sir Richard Shepherd until the new year after claims the local association was 'misled' by party officials.

One of the shortlisted candidates, Councillor Marco Longhi, has told the Express & Star it will be January 22 before the selection is made. It was supposed to have already been done.

The Conservative Party has reportedly banned two of Theresa May's special advisers from standing for Parliament because they failed to campaign in the Rochester and Strood by-election.

It is understood Nick Timothy and Stephen Parkinson had feared they would be in breach of their code of conduct had they taken part in political campaigning.

Sutton Coldfield-born Mr Timothy wrote to the chairman of the Aldridge-Brownhills constituency association complaining that the party had said he had withdrawn from the selection.

With a majority of 15,256 at the last election the seat is considered safe for the Conservatives.

Seventy people had applied to be the candidate to replace Sir Richard, who will stand down at the election after 36 years.

The local association whittled down the list to 10 names and then came up with a shortlist of four.

The final selection was meant to have taken place behind closed doors on December 13.

According to the Conservative Home website, Tory headquarters had told the Aldridge association, wrongly, that the home secretary's adviser Mr Timothy had withdrawn from the selection.

The four shortlisted candidates are Pamela Hall, Wendy Morton, Adrian Pepper and Walsall councillor Marco Longhi.

Armed robber fails in appeal on jail sentence

A GAMBLER who committed a string of armed robberies across the Black Country to pay his debts has failed in challenging his 'inevitable' long prison sentence.

William Thomas Finch, of Bilston Lane, Willenhall, committed five terrifying robberies and one attempted robbery in a few weeks last year.

Jailed – William Finch

Donning disguises, the 57-year-old walked into shops, bingo halls and a building society and threatened staff with an imitation shotgun.

He was eventually caught out and, in May, jailed for 14 years at Wolverhampton Crown Court. He had been convicted of five robberies, one attempted robbery and six counts of possessing the imitation shotgun.

He appealed against the length of the sentence but has been told by Lord Justice Laws that he deserved every day of the term for such prolific crime.

He said: "This applicant committed a series of armed robberies, using what appeared to be a sawn-off shotgun. He subjected his victims, one of whom was pregnant at the time, to a traumatic and terrifying ordeal.

"It would seem that he was motivated by a need to sort out his financial situation, which had become critical because of his escalating gambling habit," he said.

The court heard Finch's raids were strikingly similar, involving threats to shoot staff members. He wore a black hooded top and masked his face with clothing.

The crimes included a robbery at a West Bromwich Building Society branch in Wednesbury, where he stole about £900, on August 9. Other crimes included an attempted robbery at a post office, in Rough Hay, Darlaston, on September 25 and a robbery at a Gala Bingo hall in Darlaston, stealing about £2,150, on September 28.

He already had a long list of convictions to his name, including many offences of theft, the court heard. Rejecting his challenge to the length of his sentence, Lord Justice Laws, sitting with Mr Justice Openshaw and Mr Justice Lewis, said a long term was 'inevitable'.

Boris backing swabs bid for Margot

Brave little Margot Martini seen with her mother Vicki after beginning her treatment

LONDON Mayor Boris Johnson has backed a drive to get more people to join the bone marrow donor register inspired by toddler Margot Martini.

A swabbing event is being arranged at City Hall where London Assembly staff, including Mr Johnson are set to take part. Margot's parent's Yaser and Vicki wrote to the mayor to ask for his support and to look at holding a swabbing event to bolster the stem cell/ bone marrow donor register.

Mr Johnson said: "It's a wonderful idea – thank you Victoria to bringing this to my attention and we are exploring at holding an event with Delete Blood Cancer at City Hall for staff to encourage them become stem cell donors."

Two-year-old Margot died in October after a rollercoaster year-long fight with two rare forms of leukaemia. A year earlier Margot had been diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia (ALL) and Acute Myeloid Leukaemia (AML) with Vicki, who grew up in Essington, and father Yaser launching the Swab4Margot campaign under the Team Margot banner which was backed by celebrities including Stephen Fry and Gary Barlow. The appeal went viral across the world and led to 50,000 people requesting swab kits from the charity Delete Blood Cancer UK in the first six weeks.

London Mayor Boris Johnson, backing the campaign

Margot was one of 1,800 people in the UK in desperate need of a life saving bone marrow transplant. For more information go to www.teammargot.com.

Upsurge in thefts of parked up cycles

POLICE have revealed that a total of more that £1.5 million worth of bicycles have been stolen from railway stations this year.

British Transport Police said 5,318 bikes were taken by thieves between April 2013 and March this year – which is the equivalent of 14 bikes a day. The total number of bicycles stolen across England, Wales and Scotland rose by 3.6 per cent this year compared to the last financial year.

During this 12-month period a total of 1,381 suspects were arrested, BTP said, as it launched a nationwide campaign to tackle bicycle theft. Recent statistics from the BTP show that there has been an increase in bicycle thefts over the West Midlands this year. Between December 2013 and November 2014 a total of 33 bikes were stolen.

At Wolverhampton 14 bikes were stolen.

Superintendent Jason Bunyard, who oversees Operation Wiggins, said: "Following investment in cycle racks and spaces for bikes on trains, events such as the Tour de France, and with people being more conscious of the environment and their health, there has been a huge surge in their popularity."

Review over collections

A REVIEW of recycling collections carried out by Walsall Council and its subsequent disposal has taken place to ensure they meet new regulations.

Starting this month, all local authorities will need to meet new requirements laid down in the European Commission's Waste Framework Directive, in relation to recycling collections, unless it can be proved that this is not technically, environmentally or economically practicable.

The council carries out mixed collections in one bin collected fortnightly.

Brass concert

THE Staffordshire Band will perform at Walsall's Forest Arts Centre on February 6. The band will perform a mix of brass band tunes along with various popular orchestral classics. Tickets cost £6 for the 7.30pm show. Call 0300 555 2898.

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High risk residents urged to have jab

PUBLIC health chiefs are reminding residents in high risk groups to make sure they have their flu vaccines.

Mothers-to-be, children aged between two and four, under 65s with existing health conditions, and over 65s fall into the category.

The flu vaccine is free for people in these groups and they should see their GP or practice nurse for information.

Walsall's health chief, Councillor Ian Robertson said: "The danger is to think flu is just a heavy cough and cold but ask anyone who's had it and they'll tell you otherwise. It leaves you incredibly weak and as well as having potentially serious complications it can cause death in some cases.

"We also have a responsibility to those in our family and wider communities that could contract flu.

"We're appealing to pregnant women, people under 65 with existing health conditions such as diabetes, severe asthma, chest or heart complaints, and the under 65s to get their free flu vaccination sorted as soon as possible.

"If anyone has any doubts I would urge them to talk to their GP, midwife, district nurse or any other health professional."

Ted Baker in the Bullring

CLOTHING retail company Ted Baker has opened a brand new store in Birmingham's Bullring.

The new 3,207 square foot store will house the brand's AW14 menswear selection.

The shopfront has been designed to represent the city's industrial heritage with feature walls adorned with cogs and copper, black steel and smoke-distressed oak. Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter is also reflected in the store's design.

The store is giving away leather bound notebooks which can be embossed, as well as a £1,000 prize.

Shock for man

A MAN suffered an electric shock while changing a light fitting at home in Walsall. Firefighters and paramedics were called to Hallcroft Way, Aldridge at around 2pm on Thursday December 18. A 59 year-old man was taken to Walsall Manor Hospital as a precaution.

On track for more seats with London Midland

One of the new Class 350/3 Desiro trains

THOUSANDS more seats per week are now available on trains throughout the West Midlands as part of a £62 million investment in services.

Rail firm London Midland hailed the move as its biggest timetable shake-up in six years, promising more services in and out of Birmingham and to London,

London Midland announced £62m worth of new trains, new services and 139,000 more seats per week across its network. This includes 75,000 extra seats in and out of Birmingham New Street and more direct services to the capital.

London Midland managing director Patrick Verwer said: "With more people travelling with us each year our passengers are telling us they want more services, quicker journeys and more seats. We have listened and taken the opportunity with our new trains to make as many improvements for as many passengers as we can.

"With £62 million invested in new trains, this is the biggest change to our timetable in six years." In the West Midlands the Cross City line will see one of the biggest improvements with the Redditch to Birmingham service increasing from two to three trains per hour. There will also be an extra 6,000 seats between New Street and Birmingham International.

London Midland is also increasing the number of services from Birmingham and Coventry to London. This means there will be an extra 18,000 seats on this route to and from the capital each week.

The company said that since 2007 it has seen demand for its services grow by a third."

For more details on the changes to local services visit www.londonmidland.com/goodnews

Union calls for urgent talks over council cuts

UNION bosses has called for urgent talks with Walsall Council chiefs to stop planned cuts to youth services.

Cuts of more than £2 million to youth services have been suggested in the cash-strapped authority's plans to slash £86m from its budget over the next four years. Unite claims thousands of the town's young people will be left with nowhere to go if youth centres close.

Union bosses have written to council leader Sean Coughlan urging decision-makers to rethink plans. The union which represents the council's youth workers, claims that slashing the youth service budget will see youth clubs closed, dozens of youth workers sacked and spell the end of universal youth services open and accessible to all Walsall's young people.

Bosses said they were calling for urgent talks to safeguard the future of the borough's youth service by securing a commitment to ring-fence funding and the protection of qualified youth workers.

Sacrifice

Colenzo Jarrett-Thorpe, Unite national officer for youth, community and playworkers, said: "These cuts will rip the heart out of services that thousands of young people depend on. Now is not the time to sacrifice Walsall's youth service, on the contrary we need to invest in young people."

He said the future of Walsall's youth service was at stake and the planned cut in funding would destroy Walsall's youth services.

He added: "Unite believes the current consultation has been inadequate and will campaign to demand councillors and decision-makers in Walsall think again."

Jewellery store deal is stirling

A jewellery store will become the latest offering to open at Walsall's main shopping centre.

Owners of the Saddlers Centre have finalised a deal with family jewellers F Hinds.

It is Topland's 52nd deal since it acquired the shopping centre in February last year.

The store will open at the end of January.

Steve Pope, group director at Topland, said: "We are pleased to add this major jeweller to our tenant list and F Hinds opening in the Saddlers this a further indication of the improvements we have made to the quality of the overall customer offer at the centre.

"Customer footfall is up in the scheme since our purchase and the Saddlers is bucking the national and regional footfall trends that have been declining."

Topland also has plans to develop a food court in the future and bosses said they were in discussions with major food court operators which will offer more diversity for the centre.

Saddlers stars are on song for visit

Players Liam Kinsella and James Baxendale hand over a gift to Holly Locke, aged one, during their visit to the Manor

SMILES lit up the faces of poorly young patients at Walsall Manor Hospital when star Saddlers players popped in to bring them some festive cheer.

The entire Walsall team along with manager Dean Smith paid a visit to the children's wards recently to deliver gifts. Many of the youngsters were grinning from ear to ear as the stars went around chatting to them and their parents.

Liam Kinsella, James Baxendale, Paul Downing and Richard O'Donnell were joined by their team-mates as they laughed and joked with the families.

They called into Ward 21, the games room, the paediatric assessment unit and the outpatients department during their 90-minute visit. While in the outpatients waiting room the lads burst into an impromptu performance of Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer to the delight of the children and the staff. James Chambers said: "It's good to be able to do something to lift their spirits and to give the parents a few words of encouragement."

Among the youngest patients they spoke to was 15-month-old Amy Jones, who received two teddy bears and sweets. Her mother Caroline Jones, aged 24, of Millfield Avenue, Little Bloxwich, said: "My husband Kevin is a big Saddlers fan. He left just before they all walked in. He'll be gutted when he finds out that he missed meeting the team."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gas works move to see road shut

A MAIN route into Walsall town centre will be closed for more than a week because of gas mains work.

Part of Bridgeman Street will need to be closed to allow the work to be carried out on behalf of National Grid Gas.

A diversion route incorporating Queen Street, Corporation Street West and Bradford Street will be in place and will impact on traffic going between the town centre and Walsall Manor Hospital.

It is expected to begin on January 10 and take around nine days to complete.

Odell will perform at Chase concerts

SINGER-SONGWRITER Tom Odell will be performing at Cannock Chase next year.

Odell, whose version of Real Love is used on the John Lewis Christmas advert, is the first big name to sign up for the Forest Live concerts on the Chase.

He will take to the stage on July 12.His debut album, Long Way Down, released in June 2013 reached number one in the charts. An extra outdoor concert will be performed on Cannock Chase.

Woman is led to safety after fire

FIRE chiefs tackled a blaze in the living room of a bungalow in Great Wyrley. Firefighters were called to a property in Quinton Avenue in the early hours.

A woman raised the alarm with her neighbour who called 999 and helped lead her to the front porch.

Cannock fire station's manager Martin Weaver, who led the incident, said: "This lady had a lucky escape."

Abattoir animal shed to expand

AN ABATTOIR has been granted permission to expand.

The Newtown Abattoir, based on the Stafford Road in Newtown, near Great Wyrley applied to build an extension onto its existing animal storage shed.

Extending the shed will allow the abattoir to house more animals before they are sent to slaughter.

Resurfacing bid

A ROAD in Streetly will close for just over a week for a carriageway resurfacing scheme being carried out by Lafarge Tarmac. Hardwick Road will be closed between 9.30am and 4pm from January 5 to 14.

ADVERTISEMENT

Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. 'Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. 'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on **0800 61 21 118** and he'll be happy to help!

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews

ANOTHER Christmas, and more angry customers finding that the 'Winter Wonderland' theme parks do not quite live up to expectations.

Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen found himself subject to the ire of an army of angry mothers after his Magical Journey in Sutton Coldfield turned out to be more grotty than grotto. Not only was Santa handing out duff presents, his elves were too busy puffing away on cigarettes to bother wrapping them up. And that was when they were not called into action to push the magical mystery train up the hill every time it broke down.

Still, it could have been worse. They could have gone to the Yorkshire Winter Wonderland which, judging from the pictures, looked more like an abandoned PoW camp with a few tailors' dummies thrown in to lighten the mood.

Unsurprisingly, both attractions have closed, leaving behind a number of angry customers, but you have to wonder what people really expect. As with all of these attractions, customers are asked to buy into a fantasy land in a far-off corner of the universe that does not really exist. Do they really think it is going to be created in temporary exhibition at a golf course in the West Midlands, or an exhibition hall in Harrogate, for £22.50 a head? Old Laurence really should have known better than getting involved.

The thing is, children can often take pleasure in the simplest of things, and there really is no need to splash out on some overblown commercialised mini-theme park to keep them entertained over Christmas.

But, of course, it is far harder to please the overgrown children, the adults. No wonder cynical companies, with an eye on the bottom line, try to exploit these child-like yearnings. And no wonder it always ends in tears.

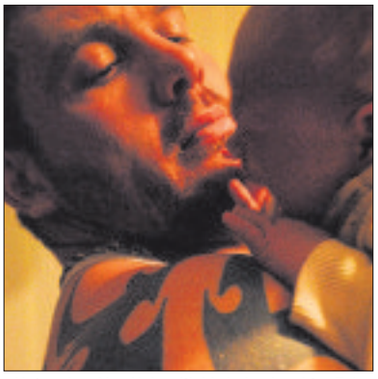
MIND you, while I'm all for looking back at the days when Christmas was a simpler, less commercial affair, I do think the main television companies might be taking things a bit far this Christmas.

Look, I've got nothing against repeats, even if I do think the ubiquitous showings of Morecambe & Wise, or Only Fools and Horses, are overdone, and whisper it quietly, a bit over-rated. Eric and Ernie were okay, but give me Mike Yarwood anyday.

But this year Channel Five is truly distinguishing itself, with Chas & Dave's Xmas Knees Up ¬– from 1982 – forming the centrepiece of its prime-time Christmas Day schedule. And they're not just showing it once. If, for some reason, you find yourself washing your hair on Christmas night, they are repeating it again on Sunday.

A repeat of a repeat, then. And let's face it, one that wasn't much cop Long, Long Ago.

Steve breeds bullfinches in his spare time



Hotworker Alan Hale with his baby daughter Evie

Shaun's hobby is rockabilly music

Hammering home a different side

These are metal workers but not as you know them as an exhibition illustrates. CHARLIE BENTON reports

FROM breeding bullfinches to rock climbing – the private lives of metal workers of the Black Country are being explored in a new exhibition.

Artist Luke Perry has got behind the camera to show a different side to some of the people helping to keep the region's industrial heritage alive.

The Behind the Hammer exhibition has been created as part of the Black Country Echoes festival and focuses on hot-workers and chainmakers at Solid Swivel, based in Cradley Heath.

Mr Perry said: "I am traditionally a public monument sculptor, that is what I am known for, but when Black Country Echoes approached me for this piece they were very loose in their brief.

Contrasts

"They wanted something that explored Solid Swivel as a company, but they said I should just do it in a way that I find interesting."

Mr Perry, who admits he had not done much photography at all since university, decided it was the best way to convey the lives of the metalworkers.

The photographic pieces, which were hung on the library carousels, each use one of the workers at the company as a subject, but contrasts their private lives at home with their work.

He explained: "There is an opinion from people that if you work in a factory that is kind of all you do – as in you go off to work, you hit something with a hammer and then you go back home again, and there is no depth.

"I have seen the other side of it now and a lot of these people go home and they are botanists or they speak multiple languages, and they have great depths of personality and that is something I have always wanted to explore in a project.

"Public artwork, big sculptures and such, don't really lend themselves to a matter as intimate as that whereas photography does."

Mr Perry is the son of Graham Perry, the managing director of Solid Swivel, who also features in the exhibition.

The Solid Swivel company has been in the Perry family for more than a century.

Mr Perry continued:"I chose five different people who I thought were a good example of what they do at work, but also had a really interesting and often a very contrasting extra-curricular life.

"I tried to show as a catalyst to understanding this idea that people can be different, and have more depth than it might seem at first.

"I tried to show that by taking two photographs – one of them at work and one of them doing what it is they do at home. All of the materials used to create the prints, from the paper to the metal used in the frames, were found in the Black Country.

Mr Perry said although some of the metal workers were unsure of being involved originally, they were very accommodating.

"All of them were a little nervous about having their photos taken but they were very trusting and kind," Mr Perry said.

"Their jobs require a lot of concentration, which meant they could not focus on what I was doing too much anyway which was very helpful. A lot of them were very welcoming, inviting me to their house, they were very kind."

Mr Perry said people who visit the exhibition will be surprised by the contrasting lives of the workers featured.

"One of the subjects, Alan, is a hotworker, so his job requires a great deal of physical strength, but outside of work he is a dad of three, a very sensitive father, and it is all very lovely to watch.

Delicate

"Alan also makes these very delicate little cakes. A lot of people might think that forgers come into work, then go home to walk their Staffordshire Bull Terriers and drink, and that is just not what it is like – he is a very modern man in many ways.

"Steve, a chainmaker, is another subject. His work is so hot and dangerous and he uses huge 40-ton presses, and then he goes home and he breeds bullfinches.

"When you go into the aviary you have to be so quiet and calm and subtle in the way you measure out the liquids. All of the subjects are surprising.

"My father was the most surprising though, to look at him now you wouldn't think he was a mountaineer."

The exhibition will remain at Cradley Heath Library for several months.

Photographer Luke Perry has an exhibition of some of his work

WEEK IN POLITICS

with Daniel Wainwright

THE picture of David Cameron flanked by the Chelsea Pensioners on the front of his greeting card was not exactly something that screamed 'It's Christmas', Noddy Holder style.

What it did attempt to convey was a sense of British pride. If there was a subtle hint in there for next year it might be that he wants everyone to think he's the one with whom Britain and all its great institutions are safe rather than Ed Miliband.

Certainly he is trying to ram home the message that a vote for UKIP would just let Labour back into Downing Street.

That message doesn't seem to have come up to the Black Country; or if it has people seem perfectly happy with that.

A poll by Tory peer Lord Ashcroft made for bleak reading for the Conservatives as it showed them in a distant third place in Dudley North. The seat is one of the key marginals the Tories failed to win in 2010 when they ended up having to settle for a coalition with the Lib Dems.

So on the one hand, David Cameron's argument that voting UKIP just lets Labour in makes sense. If we were to do as Labour wants, which is to just see UKIP as 'more Tory than the Tories', then the polls suggest support for the two parties added together would be greater than Labour.

Difference

As a result, people voting UKIP would get the absolute opposite of what they want – a party that doesn't want a referendum on the EU. The argument does not hold water though.

Sitting Labour MP Ian Austin does want a referendum and will tell anyone who asks him so. Also, UKIP loves to point out it takes votes off Labour as well. But it's more than that.

UKIP has made little secret of the view that it does not see any difference between the Tories and Labour. Deputy leader Paul Nuttall calls them 'two cheeks on the same backside' while Nigel Farage has said he'd do a 'deal with the devil' in return for the referendum. In short 'vote UKIP, get Miliband' means nothing to them.

UKIP will be quite happy getting some MPs elected and then making various demands in return for their support on key votes. Britain does not do presidential elections like the US, however much Tony Blair might have liked it if we did.

When people go to the polls in May they are not voting for a choice between Cameron, Miliband, Clegg, Farage or Howling Laud Hope of the Monster Raving Loony Party.

They are choosing their local MP. Of course that's always been the case. It just seemed a little less so when it was a straight choice between one party or the other.

The coalition has changed that.

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Profits on the buses despite cuts

NEWS of increases in bus fares despite falls in the costs of fuel and, investment of £34m on new buses by National Express West Midlands, has delivered mixed messages to bus users across Birmingham and the Black Country. However, the National Express company's profit margin continues to rise as severe government cuts bring local buses to crisis point.

Supported buses are services that are subsidised by local authorities because they are not provided by commercial bus companies. Commercial operators have no legal requirement to run loss-making services. Local authorities have a statutory duty to identify a transport need and provide services where these transport needs would not otherwise be met.

Not surprisingly we are in a position where in more and more areas pensioners have bus passes but no buses on which to use them! Yes, we hear news of bus fare increases and new investment in bus fleets yet the underlying trend is for a poorer service as profits soar in the private sector.

CLLR DOUG JAMES, Walsall

Who's best at the NIA

SUNDAY night at the NIA I saw The Who play for more than two hours, keeping up a standard throughout surpassing artists half the age of the surviving original members – guitarist and songwriter Pete Townshend and frontman Roger Daltrey.

The backing band played and sang excellently, the harmonies being sung especially well on the songs from the early part of The Who's career.

It was an excellent set with some moments of transcendent power, and no-one has songs or music like these guys!

Classical music comes in many forms and I can safely say this was classical music!

An excellent night all round and on the strength of it I feel a compulsion to ask one question – why are they retiring?

S PAGE
Walsall

EU ruling stupidity of leaders

IT seems that this government is getting more stupid than ever by not deporting foreign criminals and illegal immigrants because of the EU's silly human rights ruling; and then awarding them almost £17m in compensation.

George Osborne says that the austerity measures will have to continue for a few more years; council workers doing vital jobs all over the country are being made redundant because of cash strapped councils, so George, how about giving some of these wasted millions to them.

Mr Cameron says people will have to tighten their belts, because of the cuts, but MPs, ministers, bankers and the occupants of the House of Lords do not suffer.

MPs can employ their wives or husbands at the expense of the tax payer, that's two large salaries per household, plus getting most of their household goods free, is it any wonder that most of them are millionaires?

B J SMITH, Walsall

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

UK state pensions are much too low

I WOULD wholeheartedly agree with your correspondent M Cooper (letters, December 8) that British state pensions are much too low and need to be raised. However, his or her letter has two worrying features.

One is the use of misunderstood statistics. On reading Cooper's assertion that the Spanish state pension is £26, 630, my immediate reaction was disbelief, for I suspected (correctly as I discovered), that the average salary in Spain would be lower than that in the UK, and that such a figure would be economically unsustainable. In fact, the average pay in Spain is £23,491. Cooper is not comparing like with like. Spain has a system of an earnings related state pension, rather than Britain's flat rate. Still more extreme is Brazil, where the same table shows a maximum possible state pension of £14,969, nearly three times the average wage in that country.

The other problem is Cooper's strange assertion that the pension is 'not a benefit, but a right', as if the two were mutually exclusive. The pension is unequivocally a benefit and also a right, paid to everyone who qualifies. I want a higher pension for myself, but I would be a gross hypocrite if I did not campaign at the same time for younger recipients of out-of-work benefits such as Job Seeker's Allowance or in-work benefits such as tax credits.

A T HARRISON
Walsall

Generosity of town praised

MAY I, through the letters page of your newspaper, pay tribute to the people of Darlaston in the way they responded to the poppy appeal this year.

To organise the appeal requires large amounts of good will from stores, shops, schools, pubs and organisations as well as the individuals who support us by giving their time and donations.

The amount received in the town during the two weeks of the appeal was £14,637.40. This has exceeded the money raised in any previous appeals.

J JOHNSON
Poppy Appeal

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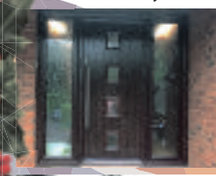

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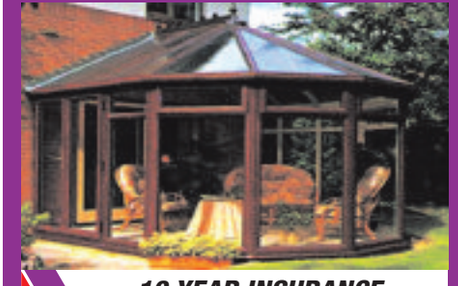

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Fears over axe for 90 Ring and Ride jobs

UP to 90 Ring and Ride jobs may be lost after its budget was slashed, although bosses vowed to maintain the same level of service for passengers.

Earlier this year Centro, the authority that oversees transport in the West Midlands, announced £7 million of budget cuts are on the way to cope with cuts in the levy it gets from local authorities.

by Simon Stone

As part of the cuts, £700,000 has been slashed from the budget of West Midlands Special Needs Transport (WMSNT), which operates the Ring and Ride service across Dudley, Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Walsall, Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull.

About 22,000 people use the service, which offers door-to-door transport for the elderly and disabled if they are unable to use buses, trams and trains. Unite the union regional officer Caren Evans said about 50 drivers and 40 schedulers are at risk of redundancy.

"The company has come to the union and we are working together to try and redeploy staff, offering training," she said. "We are really trying to look at other alternatives within the company.

"There are some jobs other people might be able to do, there are options on the table for the members. We understand people are upset about it." It is early days yet, Mrs Evans said, and they are trying to minimise the effects of the budget cuts as much as possible, but there will be some job losses.

Any changes will take effect on March 30.

It was announced in November, council leaders in the West Midlands will give £7.8m to run the service next year, down from £8.5m for the current year.

The fares to use the service in the evening are set to double, going up to £2 after 7pm. But the Sunday service scrapped in 2014 will be brought back, with a £2 charge. The £1 charge for using it Monday to Friday before 7pm is fixed. Earlier in the year, the 60p fare went up to £1.

£50k pay cut looms as chief to lose role

Chief executive officer of the service, Anthony Marsh

THE under-fire boss of West Midlands Ambulance Service is to see his pay fall by £50,000 next year when he steps down from his second job running another health trust.

Anthony Marsh's salary came in for heavy criticism after it was revealed he was on £232,000 a year – £90,000 more than the Prime Minister – for splitting his week between the West Midlands and the East of England Ambulance Service Trust.

Now it has emerged the dual role will end almost a year earlier than planned as the East of England trust will begin looking for a permanent chief executive in January.

When that happens, the £50,000 a year pay 'uplift' Mr Marsh was given, will end and he will revert to working full time for the West Midlands trust.

East of England Ambulance Service said Mr Marsh would stay in post until his successor was appointed and that the process would begin in January 2015.

He has faced heavy criticism both for his pay and costs as well as splitting his week between two high profile roles.

West Midlands Ambulance Service justified the arrangement saying it cost taxpayers less than two chief executives and that Mr Marsh worked constantly while in his taxi, answering all his own emails. West Midlands Ambulance Service also leases Mr Marsh a Range Rover Sport at a cost of £12,106.32 a year. Junior health minister Dan Poulter called the pay 'obscene'.

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Poundland signs up for store at £12m complex

New post office unveiled

Cutting the ribbon to reopen Lane Head Post Office, High Road, Willenhall, is David Winnick MP with postmaster Sukh Singh

A NEW-LOOK post office with extended opening hours was unveiled during a ribbon-cutting ceremony by an MP. Walsall North MP David Winnick officially reopened Lane Head Post Office, in High Road, Willenhall.

The new-look post office has three counters, a new style open-plan position, one modern screened position and a serving point, which will sit alongside the retail till and offer a wide range of post office services. Opening hours have also been extended by an extra 25 hours and 30 minutes each week.

Post Office bosses have said the open-plan counters make it easier for customers and staff to talk, and the extra opening hours will make it more convenient as people now have more choice as when to visit.

Mr Winnick said: "It has provided more facilities for customers both post office wise and a wide range of goods. I'm quite sure the local community appreciates the substantial improvements that have taken place."

It was announced last month that Willenhall's main post office in John Street had been saved from the axe after a U-turn over controversial plans to close and move it.

POUNDLAND is the second big brand to sign up for a multi-million pound shopping and leisure complex in Walsall town centre.

The Willenhall-based firm has been confirmed for the £12 million St Matthews Quarter development, which is expected to create around 200 new jobs overall, and will join homeware store B&M.

Poundland bosses said they were delighted to take on the 8,900 sq ft unit on a 10 year lease – their third store in the town after branches in the Saddlers Shopping Centre and Park Street.

Ben Wall, Poundland's head of portfolio management, said: "Poundland has grown significantly over the past 12 months and we're delighted to see this expansion continuing with another store in Walsall.

"The existing stores have been very popular with local shoppers and we are confident this store will be just as successful. We're looking forward to opening our doors."

Brilliant

Norton and Proffitt Developments, a joint venture between St Modwen and Goold Estates Ltd, was granted planning permission for the multi-million pound development by Walsall Council. It will see 11 units for retail, restaurants and leisure created in Digbeth and Lower Hall Lane, although there is no confirmed date for work to start. Mark Watkins, senior development surveyor at St Modwen, said: "The lettings to Poundland and B&M are a brilliant start for our new development of shops, restaurants and leisure facilities."

The retail and leisure development is part of Norton and Profitt's wider £90m regeneration of St Matthews Quarter, and will create 90,000sq ft of retail and leisure amenities. Dominic Goold, of Goold Estates, added: "Poundland and B&M getting on-board marks the beginning of the next phase of the St Matthews Quarter project."

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Not only that but the lucky winner will also have breakfast included at the Hilton, lunch at The France Show and admittance to a wine seminar included in the prize. This amounts to a prize value of around £300. Five lucky runner ups will receive a pair of tickets of the show worth £16 pounds.

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The France Show takes place January 23-25 and you may choose any night to stopover between January 22-25 inclusive (subject to availability).

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Smiles return at burglary-hit playgroup

Barry Picken from The Rotary Club with committee secretary of the playgroup, Lynn Taylor and youngster Olly

THE kindness of local firms, organisations and individuals has put a smile back on the faces people running a burglary-plagued playgroup.

"They have restored our faith in human nature," said Lynn Taylor a member of the committee of Brownshore Pre-school Playgroup, in Hobnock Road, Essington.

She spoke after receiving a £1,000 donation from Wednesfield Rotary Club to help repair the damage and loss from two break ins in a week during which computers were stolen and rooms trashed. The cheque was presented by Mr Barry Picken from the Rotary Club.

Mrs Taylor said the cash followed the donation of a TV and an iPad from Tesco and School Stickers to help boost their fundraising Christmas raffle. Local firm Fife Installations also did not charge them for the labour when putting in a CCTV system aimed at preventing further crime at the premises.

Mrs Taylor said: "The break-ins were really demoralising after we had put so much effort into fundraising for the project over the past 18 months. We all felt very low but the response of the local community has given us a real lift. We cannot thank them enough."

Essington Parish Council Chairman Councillor David Clifft said: "I am delighted to hear of the support offered by the local people and firms. It is typical of the community spirit of the village."

Councillor Clifft also pointed out that the £100 he offered for information leading to the conviction of those responsible for last month's burglaries at the play group had now grown to £350 after other people had added to the reward.

The pre-school is not-for-profit, offering low-cost education to young children of underprivileged families, and supports its running costs mainly through fundraising.

The Just Giving address is justgiving.com/yimby/brownshore#/

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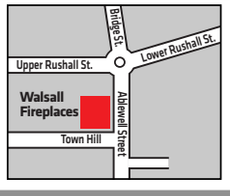

Panto fun for youngsters

SCHOOLCHILDREN enjoyed festive celebrations with a pantomime after receiving a donation from the Co-op.

Around 200 youngsters from Charles Coddy Walker Academy in Walsall were treated to Robin Hood and The Babes in the Wood at Forest Arts Centre.

They were marshalled by staff from the society's energy and masonry teams and a donation was made to pay for the trip.

Lisa Chambers Wardman, acting headteacher, said: "We're really grateful to The Midcounties Co-operative for donating both time and money to help our pupils to enjoy their Christmas trip to the theatre.

"The children really enjoyed their day out, and it was the perfect way to reward their hard work and good behaviour throughout the term whilst kick-starting our festive celebrations."

David Darlaston, Co-op's head of young people engagement said: "We were happy lend a hand to the teachers at Charles Coddy Walker Academy."

Views flood in on planned budget cuts

RESIDENTS have bombarded Walsall Council with their views on proposed budget cuts –with triple the number of responses received than the previous year.

More than 5,600 comments have been made since the budget proposals went out for public consultation. Council bosses say they are 'encouraged' by the results which show there is 'general support' for 28 out of the 54 draft proposals. Data is still being processed but as a result of feedback, the cabinet recommended to step back from introducing district centre parking charges.

It was also agreed not to remove subsidies for maintaining grass sports facilities. Proposals that attracted the most comments were the planned changes to youth support services, waste management, libraries, community associations, council tax reduction scheme and car parking charges.

Many felt that the impact of cuts and closures meant important community assets such as libraries, children's centres, parks and open spaces would become run down or lost forever – having a negative impact on civic pride and the economy.

Council leader Sean Coughlan said: "With comments still coming in, this is the largest response to budget consultation we have ever achieved, tripling last year's response.

Challenges

"Initial findings show that the people of Walsall are aware of the financial challenges the council faces, however many were not aware that we have to make these savings because of cuts from government funding.

"We have to find £86million cuts over the next four years and that can't be done without pain to our communities.

"We will take time to look at the feedback but we will not shy away from making difficult decisions.

He warned that as a result of withdrawing district centre parking charges and not removing the subsidies for maintaining grass sports facilities, alternative savings would have to be found to balance the budget.

Final decisions on the budget will be made in February.

Animal welfare champion awarded

Wally Burley with Lord Lieutenant Paul Sabapathy

A LABOUR stalwart and animal welfare campaigner from the Black Country has received his MBE.

Wally Burley from Walsall was honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours List and received his award recently.

Rather than visit Buckingham Palace he went to Labour headquarters in West Bromwich, where Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands Paul Sabapathy CBE presented the MBE. After receiving the award he said: "I'd like to thank everyone for their kind words and support."

Mr Burley joined the Labour Party at the age of 15 and campaigned in the 1945 General Election. He has been a member of the Labour Party for over 68 years.

He started working for the party in 1957 and moved to the West Midlands in 1965, where he stayed before moving to the head office in 1986. Mr Burley, who is married to Walsall councillor Rose, took up a senior position in charge of all marginal seats across the country, retiring in 1991. He founded the Labour Animal Welfare Society.

Garage hit by flames

A GARAGE was severely damaged following a fire in Walsall believed to have been sparked by a tumble dryer. Around 75 per cent of the building was destroyed following the blaze in Cherrywood Road, Streetly, at around lunchtime on December 18.

It caused smoke-logging to the semi-detached home but firefighters managed to prevent flames from spreading. No-one was in at the time of the fire in the garage which took around 15 minutes to control.

Blue Coat school is shortlisted for cash

A SCHOOL in the Black Country has been shortlisted for an award of up to £10,000.

Blue Coat C of E in Walsall has qualified for the 2015 pupil premium awards following its key stage two results.

The school has been named as a national finalist in the infant and key stage three category for next year's Awards, in recognition of their achievements in helping disadvantaged pupils succeed. All finalists in the infant and key stage three and will win at least £2,000, with the winning school to be awarded a total prize of £10,000.

The school has shared its learning for assessment research and it is also a model school for Read Right.

Schools Minister David Laws said: "The pupil premium is building a fairer society with opportunity for everyone.

"The success of Blue Coat School shows us just what can be done with the pupil premium to enable every child to fulfil their potential, no matter what their background."

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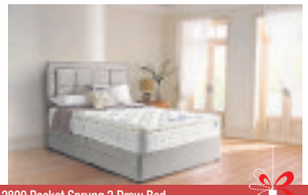
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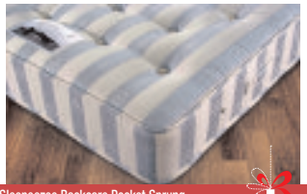
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The Preston North End team heads out for the clash against Wolverhampton Wanderers

The Wolves players in their striped jerseys from 1904

Some of the supporters during the Preston North End v Wolves match back in 1904

Preston on the attack during the clash 100 years ago

The film of the First Division match on September, 24, 1898

Historic games in the frame with film snippets of Albion and Wolves

MEMORY LANE

By Rob Cox

HISTORIC footage of football matches featuring West Bromwich Albion and Wolves has been uncovered.

The grainy 45-second clip of the Baggies from 1898 is believed to be the oldest video of the beautiful game in existence. The First Division fixture ended in defeat for the Albion, who lost 4-1 to home side Blackburn Rovers.

Although it is difficult to see the exact passage of play – including the location of the ball – it offers a fascinating glimpse into the early years of the professional game.

Swedish app developers Football Addicts found the footage on the North West Film Archive – one of the UK's largest public film collections.

Patrik Arnesson, founder of Football Addicts, said: "Although the coverage, rules, facilities, teams, leagues and players have changed over the 116 years since this film was shot, one thing remains the same – the passion of the fans. 12,000 supporters went to see this match, which shows how the enthusiasm for the sport was just as fervent then as it is now.

"It makes a contrast from the high definition shots that usually grace our TV screens, but provides an interesting insight into the nature of the game in the late 19th century."

Football Addicts was directed to the Albion video by the National Museum of Football in Manchester having set out to find the earliest footage of the game.

The company – who are behind the popular mobile app Forza Football – has put the clip on its website for football fans around the world to view. Mr Arnesson added: "Despite the grainy images, which we can make allowances for given the film is 116 years old, you can clearly make out the two different teams. This is especially easy considering Blackburn were then playing in a very similar kit to the one they wear today.

"Of course, in the backdrop we can also make out the Ewood Park faithful, fervent as ever. Although the passage of play is not the most enthralling pieces of football, the film gives us a clear sense of the atmosphere at the time."

Historic footage also exists of Black Country rivals Wolverhampton Wanderers.

The four-minute clip from a 3-2 defeat to Preston North End – available to view on the British Film Institute website – is of much higher quality having been shot seven years later in October 1905.

But the gold stripes on the Wolves kit fail to register on the black and white footage, making it appear as if the team are playing in all black.

In the 1898 clip, it can be seen West Bromwich Albion are in stripes and Blackburn are playing in pale blue and white halves, similar to the clubs' current kits.

The Baggies side featured goalscorer on the day, Ben Garfield, and club legend Billy Bassett.

The pacey left-winger – 29 at the time – went on to make 261 league appearances for the Albion, scoring 61 times.

In 1905, Bassett became an Albion director, before taking over as chairman three years later. More than 100,000 people lined the streets of the town in 1937 for his funeral procession.

A spokesman for the Albion said: "This is a wonderful piece of footage of West Bromwich Albion as we've never seen them before. Our goalscorer that day was Ben Garfield, with the side including former, Ralph Brett, and future Newton Heath - subsequently known as Manchester United - player William Richards.

"This clip has been presented as the first-ever TV footage of any football game. We'd be interested to know if any Albion fans know of any earlier footage."

Visit www.footballaddicts.com to view the clip and for more information

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Health walk celebrates its 15-year anniversary

THOUSANDS of people have benefited from a weekly health walks programme in Walsall which has celebrated its 15th anniversary.

Walsall Walk On, which is run by the council's sport and leisure services team, takes place across parks and countryside in the borough and is aimed at walkers of all ages and abilities.

There are organised walks at Wilenhall Memorial park, Walsall Arboretum, Aldridge Airport, Rough Wood local nature reserve and a string of other venues in the borough. Each walk lasts between one and six miles and most follow a circular route. Since its launch in 1999, it has been steadily growing in popularity every year with new walks being added all the time.

Success

Richard Upton, active lifestyles officer at Walsall Council, said the programme had grown from strength to strength. One of the main factors behind the success of Walk On is the role of the volunteers. Each walk is led by a qualified leader assisted by a back marker meaning the walks are suitable for people of all speeds and ability.

He added: "The volunteers are the real key to the success of Walk On. Each walk requires a leader and back marker and we are always looking for more people to come forward and act as volunteers. You may be able to help on one walk or maybe three or four."

Regular walking has a number of benefits including helping weight loss, easing back pain and reducing the risk of heart disease. No booking is needed to join a walk. People are asked to turn up at the meeting point 15 minutes before the start time and to complete a health questionnaire.

A full list of walks is available at bit.ly/1dIdvr9 or call 01922 658080.

Walk leaders Sue Cripps, Ray Beardsmore, Jacquie Orford, and Alan Lloyd

New director for Amadeus

AMADEUS, the NEC Group's retail, conference and banqueting and hospitality caterer, has strengthened its senior management team with the appointment of Tony Baldock as operations director.

He has more than 35 years of experience in the catering industry and will use his knowledge and expertise to support the growth of 48 per cent achieved by Amadeus since 2011-2012.

Before joining Amadeus, he spent much of his career with the Compass Group where he was involved in the bidding, mobilisation and project management of a number of high profile contracts with clients such as, Sainsbury's, Asda and B&Q.

Managing director of Amadeus Kevin Watson said: "Since 2011, Amadeus has won a substantial amount of new business which has resulted in our operating profit increasing by an impressive 48 per cent. We have been looking for a candidate that will be able to support this level of growth."

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SATs celebrations

Castlefort JMI pupils Jack Woodham, aged 10, Matthew Williams, 11, Katie Hill, 11 and Alex Kempsham, 10

A SCHOOL in Walsall is celebrating after achieving top SATs results. A total of 97 per cent of year six pupils at Castlefort JMI in Walsall gained level four or above in reading, writing and mathematics.

It is above the national average of 79 per cent and the best outcome of all Walsall primary schools.

Teachers, staff, governors and parents have praised schoolchildren for their achievements.

Headteacher Jo Wilson, of the school in Walsall Wood, said: "This is a great result for our school and it is down to hard work from the children and staff and the continuing support we receive from our governing body and parents.

"We have been on a real improvement journey at Castlefort since I joined the school six years ago and we are extremely proud of this achievement. It's a privilege to be headteacher of such a lovely school."

Council leader Sean Coughlan praised the achievements of youngsters. He added it was the aim of the authority to help raise standards at schools across the borough.

"I would like to congratulate everyone at Castlefort JMI on their excellent SATs results," he said.

"Well done to everyone at the school who worked so hard to achieve such a positive outcome."

U-turn over sports club fees' steep increase

A STEEP hike in sports club fees is being scrapped in Walsall – but council chiefs have announced a rise of 10 per cent is still on the cards.

Initial proposals to remove a £90,000 council subsidy to the likes of football, cricket and bowls clubs were put forward last year but put on hold after a public backlash.

by Lisa O'Brien

TheLabour-run authority has agreed not to push ahead with the plan despite the need to save £29 million next year. Instead, the authority is now planning a 10 per cent increase of club fees which would come into force from April next year.

A report says: "Council on 27 February 2014 agreed for the proposed saving for the removal of subsidies for the maintenance of grass sports facilities (£90k) be deferred by one year until 2015/16.

"Cabinet have reviewed this proposal and do not wish to proceed with this in 2015/16."

Under the previous proposals, annual fees for bowls clubs were earmarked to rise from £810 to £6,605 and costs for junior football teams from £382 to £1,618.

But clubs claimed the costs were unmanageable and said it would lead to many folding.

But Walsall's leisure and culture chief, Councillor Khizar Hussain said: "We have decided against going forward with full cost recovery as many clubs have told us they simply cannot afford to pay such exorbitant fees and would likely fold, which would mean fewer people being able to participate in leisure activities.

"Instead, we feel a 10 per cent increase would be more manageable for our local clubs, which would come into effect from April 1, 2015."

The move has been welcomed by Cynthia Bratt, of Pleck Sons of Rest bowls club which uses Pleck Park and has been running around 50 years.

The 76-year-old, of the Yew Tree Estate, Delves, said: "That's absolutely wonderful news. That's made my Christmas. It was a big worry. We love the social side of it. Some of the people have heart problems and arthritis. It's exercise for them and it gets them out of the house."

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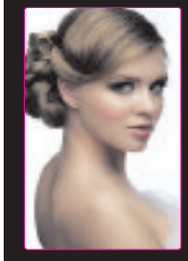

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CHOICE

Paddy McGuinness

Take Me Out (ITV, 8.30pm)

If you watched the last series of Strictly Come Dancing, then you'll have had an inkling that this dating show was coming back soon after seeing Take Me Out: The Gossip presenter Mark Wright rehearsing his salsa on the Isle of Fernandos. But who else will host Paddy McGuinness be sending to soak up the sun? We're about to find out as he introduces us to a new line-up of 30 women, who are all looking for love. So in this first edition, gamekeeper Ash, from West Sussex, school bus driver Scott, from Newcastle, Somerset magician Steve and Leamington Spa student Craig will have to do their best to impress. In theory, Steve should have an advantage as he could literally have a few tricks up his sleeve, but will the girls fall under his spell?

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. (R) **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Nigel Slater's Dish of the Day. (R) **12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **1.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **2.00** Escape to the Continent. (R) **2.30** Live Darts: BDO World Championships. Coverage of the opening day of the tournament. **4.30** Final Score. **5.20** BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **5.35** Celebrity Mastermind.

6.05 Pointless Celebrities. Alexander Armstrong hosts an FA Cup special, quizzing Gabby Logan, Robbie Savage, Mark Chapman, Phil Neville, Jermaine Jenas, Jacqui Oatley, Jason Mohammad and Trevor Sinclair.

7.00 Frank Sinatra: Our Way. Alexander Armstrong and Rochelle Humes host this one-off special in which seven acts from across the UK perform their own renditions of songs made famous by Frank Sinatra, The lucky winner will get the chance to perform at a concert celebrating the centenary of Ol Blue Eyes' birth later in the year – and choosing the best will be 12 music industry professionals, guided by the opinions of a celebrity panel including funnyman and performer Rufus Hound, singer Mica Paris and big-band musician Leo Green. The programme will also pay tribute to the singer's influence over the past seven decades, revealing why among his peers, he really was the "Chairman of the Board".

8.15 The National Lottery: Win Your Wish List. Shane Richie hosts the game show in which two contestants answer questions to try to win each other's dream prizes. Including the lottery draws, with Kate Garraway.

9.05 Casualty. As 2015 approaches, Connie lets her personal life cloud her judgement and Zoe is saddened when alcoholic Molly is brought in, having been found unconscious in the park.

10.00 BBC News; Weather.

10.15 Mrs Brown's Boys. The second of two festive episodes. Agnes increases her home security after a spate of local burglaries. (R)

10.50 Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights; National Lottery Update.

12.00 Film: Lesbian Vampire Killers. (2009) **1.20** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.25** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Animal Park. (R) **6.30 Film:** Hue and Cry. (1947) **7.50 Film:** The Titfield Thunderbolt. (1953) **9.10** Fred Dibnah's Building of Britain. (R) **9.40** Fred Dibnah's Building of Britain. (R) **10.10** British Isles: A Natural History. (R) **11.00** FA Cup Rewind: Third-Round Classics. **12.00** The Great British Bake Off Masterclass. (R) **1.00** The A to Z of TV Cooking. (R) **1.05** The World's Most Photographed. (R) **1.35 Film:** Viva Las Vegas. (1964) Musical, starring Elvis Presley. **3.00** Big Dreams Small Spaces. (R) **4.00** Restoring England's Heritage. **4.30** Live Darts: BDO World Championships. Further coverage of the opening day of the tournament. **5.30** Tigers About the House – What Happened Next. (R)

6.30 Sacred Wonders of Britain. Neil Oliver visits Bronze and Iron Age sites that were important to ancient Britons, examining a causeway built across fens near Peterborough and learning about druids on Anglesey. (R)

7.30 Dad's Army. The vicar and the verger enlist in the Home Guard, but their over-enthusiastic man-management brings the wrath of Warden Hodges down upon the platoon. (R)

8.00 Rubens: An Extra Large Story. Waldemar Januszczak examines the life and art of Flemish baroque artist Peter Paul Rubens, correcting the misconceptions that have arisen about him and re-evaluating his work.

9.00 Film: Albert Nobbs. (2011) Premiere. A woman in 19th-century Ireland has lived in disguise as a man for 30 years, holding down a job as a butler at a Dublin hotel. She meets a married house painter whom she discovers is a fellow cross-dresser, and is inspired by her new friend's happy life to seek a wife of her own. Period drama, starring Glenn Close, Mia Wasikowska, Aaron Taylor-Johnson and Janet McTeer.

10.45 Charlie Brooker's 2014 Wipe. A satirical look back at the events of the past 12 months, including the ice-bucket challenge craze and Chris Martin and Gwyneth Paltrow's "conscious uncoupling". (R)

11.45 Darts: BDO World Championships. Action from the opening day at the Lakeside Country Club in Frimley Green.

12.35 Darts Extra. **2.35** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: The Aquabats! Super Show! **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan. (R) **7.05** Canimals. (R) **7.10** Canimals. (R) **7.20** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.25** Scoty. (R) **7.35** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Hulk and the Agents of Smash. **8.15** Horrid Henry. (R) **8.30** Nerds & Monsters. (R) **8.45** Nerds & Monsters. (R) **9.00** Deadtime Stories. (R) **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. **10.20** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.15** ITV News; Weather. **11.25** Ejector Seat. (R) **12.25** The 21st Question. (R) **1.25 Film:** Columbo: Lovely but Lethal. (1973) Detective drama, starring Peter Falk and Martin Sheen. **2.55** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **3.55** Tipping Point. (R) **4.55** Big Star's Little Star. (R) **5.55** Regional Programme ; Weather.

6.05 ITV News; Weather.

6.20 Film: Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang. (2010) A woman is left running the family farm alone while her husband is fighting in the Second World War. The wart-faced magical nanny is on hand to help her cope with her unruly children, their even more mischievous evacuated cousins, and her scheming brother-in-law, who wants the farm for himself. Fantasy comedy, with Emma Thompson, Maggie Gyllenhaal and the late Sam Kelly.

8.30 Take Me Out. New series. A gamekeeper, a bus driver, a magician and a student set out to impress a line-up of single women and take one of them for a break in the sun. Paddy McGuinness hosts.

9.30 Film: The Hangover. (2009) Premiere. Three men on a stag weekend in Las Vegas wake up after a night of heavy drinking and find they have not only misplaced the groom, but somehow gained a tiger and a baby. Unable to remember the details of the night before, they set about piecing the clues together in the hope of finding their missing friend. Comedy, starring Bradley Cooper, Ed Helms and Zach Galifianakis.

11.30 ITV News; Weather.

11.45 Film: Dog Day Afternoon. (1975) A hapless bank robber sees his simple heist turn into a hostage situation and a media circus. Sidney Lumet's fact-based drama, starring Al Pacino.

1.55 Jackpot247. **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.40** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 Film: Arabian Adventure. (1979) **7.55** The Morning Line. **8.55** The King of Queens. (R) **9.25** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.25** Frasier. (R) **10.55** Frasier. (R) **11.25** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD. (R) **12.25** Gadget Man's Guide to Christmas. (R) **1.30** Channel 4 Racing. **4.00 Film:** Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel. (2009) Comedy, with Zachary Levi. **5.45** The Simpsons. (R)

6.10 The Simpsons. Bart plays a prank on Mrs Krabappel, but it backfires and results in her being fired – leaving him feeling so guilty that he resolves to do everything he can to get her reinstated. (R)

6.35 The Simpsons. Marge campaigns against a violent sport that has captivated Springfield's male population, antagonising promoter Chett Englebrecht, who challenges her to a fight. (R)

7.00 Channel 4 News.

7.30 Britain's Wildest Weather 2014. Last year, the nation was hit by tornados, floods, hurricanes and ferocious storms, as well as the chilliest August in more than two decades, but also enjoyed the hottest Halloween on record. This documentary presents eyewitness footage of an unpredictable 12 months, featuring rescues at sea, homes struck by lightning, an escape for 500 cows, and sea foam engulfing a bus. There's also a look at the science behind these wild weather events and why there may be worse to come. (R)

9.00 Film: Taken. (2008) An American teenager travelling through Europe is abducted by a gang of sex traffickers. However, what the kidnappers do not realise is that the girl's father is a former CIA agent, who employs all his old skills as he searches for the criminals and tries to rescue his daughter. Thriller, starring Liam Neeson and Maggie Grace.

10.50 Bill Bailey Qualmpeddler. Stand-up comedy from London's Hammersmith Apollo, accompanied by light-hearted musical numbers, from religious dubstep and German folk-metal to a reggae version of Downton Abbey.

11.50 Film: The Godfather: Part III. (1990) Crime drama sequel, starring Al Pacino.

2.55 Hollyoaks. (R) **5.05** Hugh's 3 Good Things. **5.15** Secret Eaters. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.50** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.25** Access. (R) **10.30** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **11.30** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **12.30** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **1.25 Film:** McLintock! (1963) Comedy Western, starring John Wayne. **3.55 Film:** The Searchers. (1956) John Ford's Western, starring John Wayne.

6.20 Film: Zulu. (1964) An upper-class soldier and his fellow officer stationed at Rorke's Drift in 1879 discover they have been cut off after the destruction of the main British army column in the area. They must rally their small force of 140 men against the might of 4,000 Zulu warriors advancing on their position. Fact-based historical drama, starring Michael Caine, Stanley Baker, Jack Hawkins, Ulla Jacobsson, Nigel Green and Chief Buthelezi, with narration by Richard Burton.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Most Shocking Celebrity Moments 2014. Countdown of the biggest showbusiness stories and scandals of the year, from Solange Knowles attacking brother-in-law Jay Z in a lift, to Cheryl Fernandez-Versini's whirlwind romance and marriage as well as her return to The X Factor. Plus, the ongoing antics of Justin Bieber, One Direction's alleged dalliances with drugs, Russell Brand's attempt to start a revolution, Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin's "conscious uncoupling" and Judy Murray's efforts on Strictly Come Dancing. The programme also has the inside track on the weddings of Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, and George Clooney and Amal Alamuddin, and considers whether Kim Kardashian's bottom is set to take over the world. Featuring contributions by Len Goodman, Janice Dickinson, James Jordan, Sinitta, Kerry Katona, Ollie Locke, Jasmine Waltz and Suzanne Shaw. (R)

11.55 Access.

12.00 SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10** Autopsy: Michael Jackson's Last Hours. Dr Richard Shepherd investigates the cases of celebrities who died unexpectedly. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. A cottage in East Sussex. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 FA Cup's 50 Greatest Moments **8.00** Top Gear **9.00 Film:** Puss in Boots (2011) **10.20** Russell Howard's Good News **10.50** Family Guy **1.50** FA Cup's 50 Greatest Moments **2.50** Russell Howard's Good News **3.20** Cuckoo Christmas Special **3.50** Close

BBC Four

7.00 Lost Land of the Volcano **8.00** Do We Really Need the Moon? **9.00** Wallander: The Dogs of Riga **10.55** Sammy Davis Jr: The Kid in the Middle **11.55** An Evening with Sammy Davis Jr **12.55** Neil Sedaka: King of Song **1.55** Lost Land of the Volcano **2.55** Sammy Davis Jr: The Kid in the Middle **3.55** Close

ITV2

12.15 The X Factor Class of 2014 **1.15** The Cube: Celebrity Special **2.10 Film:** Space Jam (1996) **3.55 Film:** Johnny English (2003) **5.40** You've Been Framed! **6.40** The Guide to You've Been Framed! **7.45 Film:** Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **9.30** Take Me Out – The Gossip **10.15 Film:** The Bourne Ultimatum (2007) **12.25** Unseen Celebrity Juice Tit Bits **1.10** Two and a Half Men **1.35** Mom **2.20** Life's Funniest Moments

ITV3

1.00 Film: Gosford Park (2001) **3.45** Agatha Christie's Marple **5.55** Rosemary & Thyme **7.00** Doc Martin **8.00** Midsomer Murders **10.00** Lewis **12.05** A Is for Acid **1.55** Judge Judy **2.15** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

1.05 Film: The Sting (1973) **3.40 Film:** Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach (1988) **5.30** Storage Wars **6.00** Storage Wars Unlocked **7.00** Storage Wars **9.00 Film:** Texas Killing Fields (2011) **11.10 Film:** Total Recall (1990) **1.20** The Motorbike Show **2.10** Minder

E4

11.00 Troy **11.30** How I Met Your Mother **12.30 Film:** The Spiderwick Chronicles (2008) **2.25** Rude(ish) Tube **4.00** The Big Bang Theory **5.00 Film:** The Golden Child (1986) **6.50** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **7.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Role Models (2008) **11.05 Film:** End of Days (1999) **1.30** The Inbetweeners **2.30** Rude Tube **3.25** Made in Chelsea: End of Season Party **4.20** Frozen at Christmas

Film4

11.00 Arrietty (2010) **1.00** Coraline (2009) **3.05** Dragonball Evolution (2009) **4.45** New in Town (2009) **6.45** The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (2010) **9.00** Resident Evil (2002) **11.00** Lawless (2012) **1.15** 10 Years (2011) **3.25** Close

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CHOICE

Kate Humble

Kate Humble – Into the Volcano (BBC2, 8pm)

Wildlife expert and TV presenter Kate Humble is brave if nothing else. Take this latest two-parter that she's fronting – in which she will be journeying right to the heart of one of the world's most active volcanoes. She and a team of geologists are on the island of Tanna, in the Vanuatu archipelago, studying Yasur, a volcano that erupts constantly, blowing out red-hot lava bombs and covering the area in thick black ash. Kate and the team are keen to decipher when another eruption can be expected, but to do this, they need to collect a lava bomb the minute it's thrown from the crater. In preparing for their mission, Kate explores the island and discovers how the volcano shapes the lives, traditions and beliefs of everyone who lives in its shadows.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.55** Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **11.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Flog It! **2.15** Songs of Praise. **2.50** FA Cup Final Score. **5.00** BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **5.20** Match of the Day Live. Arsenal v Hull City (Kick-off 5.30pm).

7.30 Still Open All Hours. Love is in the air in the corner shop as Granville continues his attempts to woo Mavis, Gastric needs yet more help with his love life and Leroy arouses jealousy.

8.00 Countryfile. Adam Henson presents a special edition focusing on rare-breed farm animals and the threats to their future. He is joined by his father Joe, a founder of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, who advises him on a potential addition to his farm – Longhorn cattle – and his daughter Ella helps train his Exmoor ponies. Adam also looks back at memorable items from the Countryfile archive featuring rare breeds, including Ellie Harrison learning to plough with a shire horse, Matt Baker following Tamworth pigs from farm to fork and Adam himself finding out how technology can help guarantee the future of rare farm animals. Including Weather for the Week Ahead.

9.00 Last Tango in Halifax. Alan finally lets Celia into his secret about Gary, but is saddened when she punishes Caroline for his mistake – and on her wedding of all days. Gillian is left humiliated at work by an unexpected visit from Robbie's other half Cheryl, who reveals she knows the pair are sleeping together.

10.00 BBC News; Regional News.

10.30 Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights. Mark Chapman presents action from today's third-round matches, which saw the lower league sides aiming to cause an upset against those from the Premier League and Championship.

11.50 The Apprentice USA. New series. Donald Trump kicks off another celebrity edition, with candidates including Gary Busey, Dionne Warwick, Meat Loaf and David Cassidy selling pizzas.

1.15 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.20** BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.15** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **8.00** Countryfile. (R) **9.00** FA Cup Rewind: Third-Round Classics. (R) **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** Food & Drink. (R) **12.00** The Great British Bake Off Masterclass. (R) **1.00** Live Darts: BDO World Championships. Coverage of the second day of the tournament. **4.45** Ski Sunday. **5.30** Coast. (R)

6.00 Tigers About the House – What Happened Next. Part two of two. The Clarks see the harsh reality of poaching in Indonesia when they visit tigers that were caught in snares, prompting Giles to concoct an ambitious plan to save the injured big cats in the wild. Back in Australia, Spot and Stripe are days away from their first birthday and will no longer be classed as cubs, while Spot faces an operation that may end with him losing all vision. (R)

7.00 Top Gear Patagonia Special. Part one of two. Jeremy Clarkson, Richard Hammond and James May take used sports cars on a gruelling trip to the world's southernmost city to stage a game of car football. (R)

8.00 Kate Humble – Into the Volcano. Part one of two. Kate joins a team of geologists on a research expedition to the Vanuatu archipelago in the southern Pacific, and explores the volcano of Mount Yasur on Tanna.

9.00 Reinventing the Royals. First of a two-part documentary in which Steve Hewlett tells the inside story of the relationship between the monarchy and the media during the past 20 years.

10.00 QI XL. Extended edition. Jeremy Clarkson, Sandi Toksvig, Danny Baker and Alan Davies attempt to answer host Stephen Fry's range of fiendish questions on the topics of luck and loss.

10.45 Racing Legends: Barry Sheene. Jim Moir (Vic Reeves) pays tribute to the former motorcycle racing world champion, examining how he rose to the top of his sport and became a popular public figure. (R)

11.45 Darts: BDO World Championships. Action from the second day at the Lakeside Country Club in Frimley Green.

12.35 Darts Extra. **2.35** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **3.35** Holby City. (R) **4.35** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: The Aquabats! Super Show! **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan. (R) **7.05** Canimals. (R) **7.10** Canimals. (R) **7.20** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.25** Sooty. (R) **7.35** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Ultimate Spider-Man. **8.15** Horrid Henry. (R) **8.30** Nerds & Monsters. (R) **8.45** Nerds & Monsters. (R) **9.00** Deadtime Stories. (R) **9.25 Film:** Columbo: Agenda for Murder. (1990) **11.15** ITV News; Weather. **11.25** Britain's Best Bakery. (R) **12.25** Inside the National Trust. (R) **1.25** River Monsters. (R) **1.55** Midsomer Murders. (R) **3.55 Film:** On Her Majesty's Secret Service. (1969) James Bond adventure, with George Lazenby.

6.35 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.45 ITV News; Weather.

7.00 Diversity Live. An entertainment special with the street-dance crew, featuring a range of spectacular new routines and appearances by special guests. Fresh from their UK arena tour, the Britain's Got Talent 2009 winners flex their creative muscles and demonstrate how all forms of dance, from ballet and jazz to tap, have inspired their career. They also look at the major influences that have helped them along the way, as the programme charts the group's journey to stardom.

8.00 Foyle's War. New series. Michael Kitchen returns to the role of Christopher Foyle, senior intelligence officer for MI5, in the first of three films. Foyle is drawn into the world of corrupt Nazi businessmen when a university professor is found murdered in a London park. When it transpires the victim was working as a translator in Nuremberg, the detective realises there are powerful people trying to conceal secrets from the Second World War. Meanwhile, Sam (Honeysuckle Weeks) volunteers for a risky undercover job, despite being pregnant. Guest stars include John Mahoney (Frasier), Jaime Winstone (Mad Dogs) and Nigel Lindsay (Four Lions).

10.00 ITV News; Weather.

10.15 Film: Hot Fuzz. (2007) Action comedy, starring Simon Pegg and Nick Frost.

12.25 Premiership Rugby Union. **1.20** The Store. **2.55** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.40** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.10 NFL: The American Football Show. (R) **7.05** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.55** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.20** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.50 Film:** Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging. (2008) Comedy drama, starring Georgia Groome. **3.50 Film:** Diary of a Wimpy Kid. (2010) Family comedy, starring Zachary Gordon. **5.40** Channel 4 News.

6.05 A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. New series. Laura Hamilton advises former pub landlady Janice Gibson, who wants to swap her Newcastle lifestyle for a new start in the Mar Menor area of southern Spain.

7.00 Phil Spencer: Secret Agent. Phil Spencer is on the Mersey, trying to sell two properties with dodgy decor and problem pooches. Ron hasn't been able to part with his four-bedroom family home after 18 months on the market, and it looks like his beloved pug Janice is to blame. On the Wirral, Phil has got his hands full with Sandy and her six dogs.

8.00 The Hotel. Mark organises a record-breaking attempt to bake Britain's biggest scone, but Cavendish owner Vicky does not have much faith in head chef Gerry's ability to pull it off.

9.00 Walking the Nile. New series. Levison Wood treks the length of the River Nile from source to sea, on a nine-month expedition taking him through jungles, savannahs, deserts, cities and war zones.

10.00 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown Christmas Special. Jimmy Carr hosts the comedy panel show's version of the words-and-numbers quiz, with team captains Sean Lock and Jon Richardson joined by Kathy Burke and David Baddiel. (R)

11.05 Rude Tube: Welcome to 2015. Alex Zane explores the 100 most popular internet videos of the past 12 months in a special edition of the show, featuring the spider-dog prank. (R)

1.00 Film: Thirst. (2009) **3.15** The Guides. (R) **3.30** Mesh: Tourist Trap. (R) **3.35** Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners. (R) **4.30** Phil Spencer: Secret Agent. (R) **5.25** Hugh's 3 Good Things: Best Bites. (R) **5.40** Small Animal Hospital. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Pip Ahoy! (R) **6.40** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.50** Chloe's Closet. (R) **7.05** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.10** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.20** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.35** Paw Patrol. **7.55** Little Princess. (R) **8.10** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.25** Wanda and the Alien. **8.40** Zack and Quack. (R) **8.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. (R) **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Monkey Life. (R) **11.00** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **12.00 Film:** Forever Young. (1992) Romantic sci-fi drama, with Mel Gibson and Jamie Lee Curtis. **1.55 Film:** The Princess Bride. (1987) Comic fantasy adventure, starring Cary Elwes. **3.50 Film:** Snow White. (2001) Fairy-tale fantasy, starring Kristin Kreuk. **5.35 Film:** Bambi. (1942) Animated drama, with the voice of Bobby Stewart.

6.55 5 News Weekend.

7.05 Film: Rush Hour. (1998) A Hong Kong detective is sent to Los Angeles to investigate a kidnapping, but the local authorities worry that his presence in America might spark an international incident, and assign a loud-mouthed and troublesome cop to keep an eye on him. However, the new partnership proves an explosive combination. Comedy adventure, starring Jackie Chan, Chris Tucker, Ken Leung, Tom Wilkinson and Chris Penn. Edited for language and violence.

9.00 Film: House at the End of the Street. (2011) Premiere. A teenager moves to a new area and discovers a nearby house was the site of a horrifying incident in which a girl murdered her parents before disappearing without trace. She befriends the killer's troubled brother, but starts to worry that he may be hiding a terrifying secret. Horror, starring Jennifer Lawrence and Max Thieriot.

10.55 Film: Final Destination. (2000) A teenager's premonition saves his friends from dying in a plane crash, but their narrow escape is only the prelude to a chain of tragedies. Horror, with Devon Sawa and Ali Larter.

12.50 SuperCasino. **3.10** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 Great Movie Mistakes IV: May the Fourth Be with You **7.30** FA Cup's 50 Greatest Moments **8.30** World's Craziest Fools **9.00** Russell Howard's Good News **10.00** Family Guy **10.45** American Dad! **11.30** FA Cup's 50 Greatest Moments **12.30** Russell Howard's Good News **1.30** Life Is Toff **4.00** Close

BBC Four

7.00 Sings Musicals **8.00** Mark Lawson Talks to PD James **9.00** Hermitage Revealed **10.00 Film:** A Royal Affair (2012) **12.10** Top of the Pops: 1980 – Big Hits **1.10** The Carpenters at the BBC **1.45** Sings Musicals **2.45** Hermitage Revealed **3.45** Close

ITV2

11.25 Take Me Out **12.25** Take Me Out – The Gossip **1.10** Blue: The Hot Desk **1.25 Film:** Richie Rich (1994) **3.20 Film:** Beethoven's 2nd (1993) **5.10 Film:** Scooby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed (2004) **7.00 Film:** Evan Almighty (2007) **9.00 Film:** Knocked Up (2007) **11.35 Film:** Saw II (2005) **1.30** Fake Reaction **2.10** Blue: The Hot Desk **2.20** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

11.25 Wycliffe **12.40** Rosemary & Thyme **1.45 Film:** Blue Murder at St Trinian's (1957) **3.35** Inspector Morse **5.55** Lewis **8.00** The Zoo **9.00** It'll Be Alright on the Night **10.00** Northern Lights **11.00 Film:** Larry Crowne (2011) **1.05** The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes **2.00** Countrywise **2.50** Judge Judy **3.10** ITV3 Nightscreen **3.40** Emmerdale

ITV4

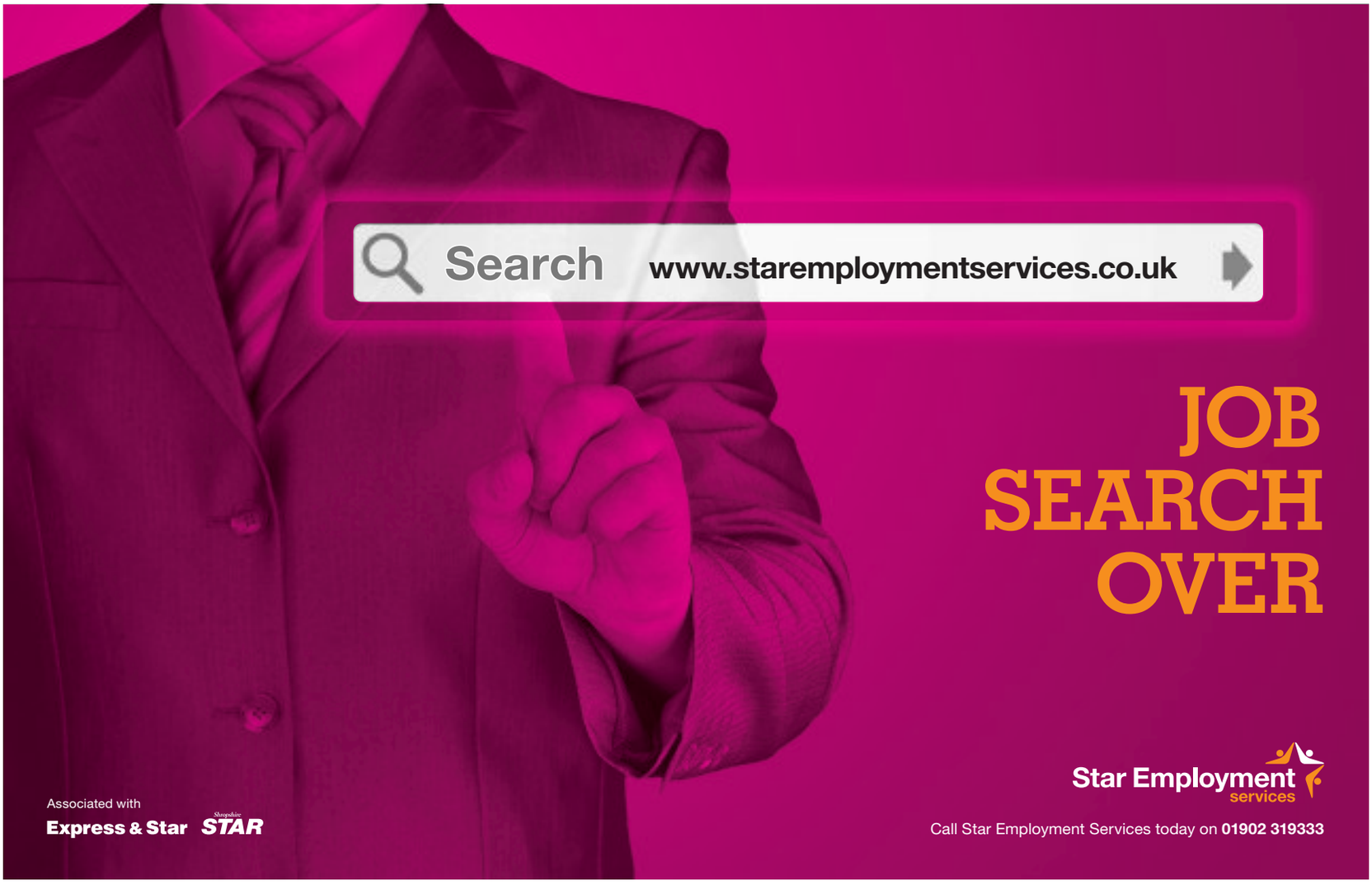
2.55 Storage Wars **6.10 Film:** The Cimarron Kid (1952) **8.00** Premiership Rugby Union **9.00 Film:** Troy (2004) **12.15 Film:** This Is Spinal Tap (1984) **1.55** The Cycle Show **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping **3.30** The Store **4.30** Teleshopping

E4

12.30 Melissa & Joey **1.30** How I Met Your Mother **2.00** The Big Bang Theory **4.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **5.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00 Film:** Home Alone 2: Lost in New York (1992) **10.20** The Inbetweeners **11.30** Made in Chelsea: End of Season Party **12.30** Virtually Famous **1.25** Rules of Engagement **2.20** The 100 **3.00** The Ricky Gervais Show **3.30** Hollyoaks

Film4

11.00 A Ticket to Tomahawk (1950) **1.00** Leap Year (2010) **3.00** Journey to the Center of the Earth (2008) **4.50** Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (2004) **6.55** Tower Heist (2011) **9.00** Battleship (2012) **11.35** Alfie (1966) **1.50** Wrong Turn 2: Dead End (2007) **3.50** Close



FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Stolen Child, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A couple who have tried unsuccessfully to conceive resort to adopting a baby from Eastern Europe. However, their newfound happiness is shattered when they discover the disturbing series of events that brought the child into their lives. Drama, starring Emmanuelle Vaugier and Corbin Bernsen. (2012)

TUESDAY
Dinner for Schmucks, BBC1, 11.50pm
An ambitious executive hopes to win a mean-spirited contest held by his bosses to find the most ridiculous dinner-party guest for everyone to mock. He thinks he has found the perfect winning entry when he meets a dim-witted and socially awkward amateur taxidermist – but has to contend with pretending they are friends. Comedy, with Steve Carell and Paul Rudd. (2010)

WEDNESDAY
Little Fockers, BBC1, 11.05pm
Nurse Greg is now the proud father of twins, but has yet to earn the respect of his wife's stern father after 10 years of marriage. The couple invite both sides of their extended family to the kids' birthday party, where Greg makes a desperate effort to finally prove his worth to his father-in-law. Comedy sequel, with Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, Owen Wilson and Dustin Hoffman. (2010)

Little Fockers, Wednesday, BBC1, 11.05pm

THURSDAY
A Time to Remember, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A middle-aged single mother returns under a cloud to the family home for Thanksgiving, where she tries to heal the fractured relationship between herself and her estranged mother. However, any possible reconciliation is threatened by an unexpected and dramatic development. Drama, starring Dana Delany, Doris Roberts, Megan Gallagher, Louise Fletcher, Rosemary Forsyth, Robert Bauer, Erich Anderson, Amy Stell, Davenia McFadden and Michael Dean Jacobs. (2003)

FRIDAY
The Invention of Lying, ITV, 10.40pm
In a world where everyone always tells the truth, a failed documentary writer learns how to lie. Since no one else knows what deception is, his most ludicrous inventions are taken at face value, making him a huge success – and ultimately leading to him starting his own religion. Comedy, starring Ricky Gervais, Jennifer Garner, Jonah Hill, Louis CK, Jeffrey Tambor, Fionnula Flanagan, Rob Lowe and Tina Fey. (2009)

PICK OF THE WEEK

Duo return to unravel another mysterious case

Prepare to be gripped to the TV again – yes, David Tennant and Olivia Coleman are back as Alec Hardy and Ellie Miller in the second series of the drama that kept the nation on the edge of its seats in March 2013.

Broadchurch made such a massive impact on its initial broadcast that it's hard to believe it's almost two years since it made its debut; and this sequel is one of the most eagerly awaited programmes of recent years.

The original run focused on the murder of 11-year-old Danny Latimer. For eight weeks, viewers attempted to guess whodunit, and were shocked when it was revealed – spoiler alert – that it was Ellie's husband Joe who was the culprit. We also cheered her on when she gave him a kicking after discovering the truth.

Both Ellie and Hardy were expected to leave the police force after solving the murder – she to perhaps start a new life with her sons elsewhere, and he due to ill health – but neither of them seems to have been able to leave the sleepy Dorset town.

Jodie Whittaker also returns as Danny's pregnant mum Beth, while Andrew Buchan, Arthur Darvill, Jonathan Bailey, Carolyn Pickles, Tanya Franks, Joe Sims, Simone McAullay, Adam Wilson and Charlotte Beaumont also reprise their roles.

But there are a few newcomers too, including Eve Myles, Marianne Jean-Baptiste, Meera Syal, James D'Arcy and Charlotte Rampling.

"The whole Broadchurch team has been delighted and properly gobsmacked by the response from ITV viewers," says writer Chris Chibnall. "When I first talked to Peter Fincham and Laura Mackie, ITV's Director of Drama about Broadchurch, I mentioned that if people liked it, there was another very different story we could tell afterwards. I'm really thrilled we're going to tell that story too."

"It's such a privilege to be able to work with Chris to bring the next chapter of Broadchurch to our screens," adds executive producer Jane Featherstone. "And although we're giving nothing away right now, I can tell you it's going to keep on delivering surprises and scale."

For now, nobody is willing to say what the surprises are, or even what the story is about – we're all going to have to tune in to find out. However, there is a clue out there for anyone with the time and patience to look for it.

At the Harrogate Crime Writing Festival in July, Chibnall, Colman and Whittaker helped launch the Broadchurch novelisation alongside author Erin Kelly. She revealed that Chibnall had added a sentence close to her publication deadline that gave a hint of what the sequel would be about.

It's been announced that Rampling will play a character called Jocelyn who didn't appear in the first series – but her house is featured on a map of the town in the book, and she is also mentioned. Could she be the key to the story?

Maybe – fans are already discussing the theory on the internet, and it will certainly be interesting to find out if they're right.

Olivia Colman and David Tennant star in Broadchurch, Monday, ITV, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Richard Wilson on the Road
ITV, 8pm
New series. The One Foot in the Grave star tours the UK in a vintage 1960s car, but there's no sat-nav for him – he's using guidebooks first published in the 1930s. Beginning in the heart of the Derbyshire countryside, the actor learns about the Kinder Scout uprising that led to the freedom to roam the Derbyshire Dales.

Rich, Russian and Living in London
BBC2, 9pm
Documentary exploring the lives of wealthy Russians who have chosen to make London their home, looking at why they favoured the city and their obsessions with the English education system, polo and the monarchy. The film follows an art collector; and an entrepreneur who says he was chased out of Russia for his liberal views and growing bank balance, as well as revealing more about the life of a supermodel and two debutantes preparing for the glitz and glamour of the prestigious Russian ball.

TUESDAY
Silent Witness
BBC1, 9pm
New series. Nikki and Jack are called to a petrol station where three people have been shot dead, and conclude it is the work of a concealed shooter working from long range – a sniper is at large in London. They combine ballistics and wound pathology with the killer-profiling skills of senior investigator DCI Jane De Freitas, as they work to find this seemingly random murderer before panic hits the city. Continues tomorrow.

WEDNESDAY
Celebrity Big Brother: Live Launch
Channel 5, 9pm
New series. The fly-on-the-wall fun begins once more as Emma Willis invites a fresh group of famous faces to move in together and have their every word and move recorded for the enjoyment of the viewing public. This time round, the famous residents will be taking part in their own fairy tale, although with Big Brother in charge, it is unlikely they are going to live happily ever after. The newly designed house has whimsical elements conjuring up a magical atmosphere full of possibility – but there are also hints that something more sinister is lurking. It's to be hoped that BB fans don't have anything else planned for the next three weeks.

Celebrity Big Brother: Live Launch, Wednesday, Channel, 5 9pm

THURSDAY
Death in Paradise
BBC1, 9pm
Chances are you know the Death In Paradise format by now: a character is killed on the idyllic Caribbean island of Saint Marie; there's a host of eclectic associates who may have done the deed, and it's up to the likes of DI Humphrey Goodman (Kris Marshall), DS Camille Bordey (Sara Martins), and Officer Dwayne Myers (Danny John-Jules) to get to the bottom of the mystery. The first victim of series four is plantation owner and businessman, Elias Thomson; he is brutally killed at his home during a group séance. The door to the room is firmly closed, so everyone at the scene is a suspect, but how did the killer go unseen when all participants – including Elias' kids, Daniel and Lucy – were holding hands throughout the séance?

FRIDAY
Xtreme Endurance Race to the Pole
Channel 5, 7pm
New series. Former rugby union player Richard Parks takes on a series of endurance events in preparation for his ultimate goal of becoming the fastest-ever person to ski unassisted to the South Pole from the coast of Antarctica. Richard's first gruelling challenge takes him to Nepal to participate in the Yak Attack, a mountain-bike race during which he battles against blistering heat, extreme cold, near-fatal collisions, sheer drops and extreme altitude on a course that winds 400 kilometres across the Himalayas.

The Musketeers
BBC1, 9pm
King Louis is tired of his cosseted royal lifestyle and demands to see things the way his carefree subjects do. But what starts out as a night of fun quickly descends into terror when he and d'Artagnan are mistaken for real commoners and kidnapped by the notorious criminal Lemaitre, who plans to sell them to Spain as slaves. It's left to the remaining three Musketeers to rescue the king and their comrade – can they save them from mortal danger and return Louis to the palace in time for his son's christening? One person who seems grateful for the king's absence is Rochefort.

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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.

8	22	7	15	■	8	14	18	17	5	13	26	7
5	■	8	■	■	5	■	■	7	■	3	■	16
2	■	20	7	6	3	1	26 I	24 N	■	22	■	21
3	2	23	■	■	■	3	■	■	25	23	22	23
8	■	22	■	4	1	7	12	■	■	18	■	26
■	19	3	22	5	■	6	■	18	13	3	24	17
■	■	■	■	15	■	3	■	26	■	■	■	■
22	10	3	7	18	■	24	■	19	3	7	1	■
7	■	12	■	■	10	26	9	3	■	2	■	16
26	8	3	18	■	■	24	■	■	■	13	3	7
18	■	2	■	16	7	25	5	23	1	3	■	8
26	■	13	■	5	■	■	11	■	■	22	■	8
24	7	17	26	5	24	7	1	■	6	3	22	14

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24 N
12	25
13	26 I

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1 E	2 J	3 D	4 S	5 Y	6 T	7 I	8 Q	9 A	10 P	11 X	12 K	13 U
14 N	15 G	16 C	17 O	18 Z	19 F	20 L	21 H	22 B	23 M	24 R	25 W	26 V

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Approve a human face (11)
9. One gets nothing for it (3)
10. Will it shoot itself? (9)
11. General secretaries? (5)
13. Fresh letters of support? (7)
14. Yet his talk is far from uplifting (3-3)
16. Specify how a token may be regarded? (6)
18. A dancer on tour perhaps (7)
19. It may be a nasty demonstration, though in play (5)
20. Taking in and finding very interesting (9)
21. Apt to have a sudden attack (3)
22. Scottish family needs it made secret (11)

Down

2. You have to do so (3)
3. Gets close in linear size (5)
4. Set out and consumed what was left? (6)
5. A smile's unambitious outcome (7)
6. Good barbers do it - only just in time (3,2,4)
7. Immediately erect a road (11)
8. The shooting of unknown persons? (11)
12. Sacking one ship in dreary surroundings (9)
15. Sold by chemists in Paris perhaps (7)
17. Possibly aspire to commend (6)
19. Seeing sense (5)
21. Cool an ardent admirer (3)

■	1	2		3		4		5		6		■
7	■		■		■		■		■		■	8
9			■	10								
	■	■	■		■		■		■		■	
11		12			■	13						
	■		■	■	■		■		■		■	
14				15		■	16					
	■		■		■	17	■	■	■		■	
18							■	19				
	■		■		■		■		■	■	■	
20									■	21		
	■		■		■		■		■		■	
■	22											■

Quick Clues:

Across

1. Unwise (11)
9. Pinch (3)
10. Enchant (9)
11. Upright (5)
13. Chronicler (7)
14. Suit of woollen cloth (6)
16. Pious (6)
18. Intrigue (7)
19. Attack (5)
20. Garment-making (9)
21. Also (3)
22. Powerful (11)

Down

2. Doze (3)
3. Unsuitable (5)
4. Interior (6)
5. Copy (7)
6. Of one mind (9)
7. Barrenness (11)
8. Reinstatement (11)
12. Height (9)
15. Plunder (7)
17. Complete (6)
19. Should (5)
21. Beverage (3)

Sudoku

	6						7	
3			9	7	4			5
		5		2		9		
8	7						5	9
		6	7		5	8		
4	5						3	7
			1	8				
5			2	9	6		1	4
	1						9	

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

7	4	1	2	3	5	9	8	6
2	5	8	9	7	6	1	3	4
6	3	9	1	8	4	2	7	5
9	6	3	4	2	7	5	1	8
1	8	2	3	5	9	4	6	7
5	7	4	8	6	1	3	9	2
4	9	7	6	1	2	8	5	3
3	2	5	7	9	8	6	4	1
8	1	6	5	4	3	7	2	9

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Pass; 3 Spyglass; 9 Learned; 10 Often; 11 Imprecations; 13 Turtle; 15 Aghast; 17 Rough diamond; 20 Crown; 21 Pension; 22 Disperse; 23 News. Down: 1 Palliate; 2 Sharp; 4 Pedlar; 5 Growing pains; 6 Antenna; 7 Sons; 8 Intelligence; 12 Students; 14 Riotous; 16 Adopts; 18 Opine; 19 Acid. QUICK - Across: 1 Sobs; 3 Advocate; 9 Abscess; 10 Ensue; 11 Dispossessed; 13 Rarest; 15 Recess; 17 Improvidence; 20 Egret; 21 Ignored; 22 Fiendish; 23 Lend. Down: 1 Standard; 2 Basis; 4 Desist; 5 Overspending; 6 Austere; 7 Even; 8 Remonstrated; 12 Ascended; 14 Remorse; 16 Avoids; 18 Nurse; 19 Deaf.

Quiz

1. Which form of political corruption was named after US politician Elbridge Gerry?
2. Who received an Oscar for his performance in Going My Way?
3. In which country was Vivien Leigh born?
4. What type of creature is the firefly?
5. What did Hippolyte Mege-Mouries invent in 1889?
6. In which ocean are the Mariana Islands?
7. Which sci-fi author wrote the screenplay for 2001: A Space Odyssey?
8. What is the kernel of the tree Myristica fragrans called?
9. Which actor/dancer was born Frederick Austerlitz?
10. Which vehicle is named from the Hindi for 'Lord of the World'?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Lager; 2 Plaice; 3 Constantinople; 4 St Christopher; 5 Daniel Day-Lewis; 6 Chopin; 7 Daisy; 8 Duchess Of Kent; 9 Taurus; 10 Hispaniola.

Niner: INCUBATOR

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

97234 gives a bird,
818 gives a female animal,
365 gives a male animal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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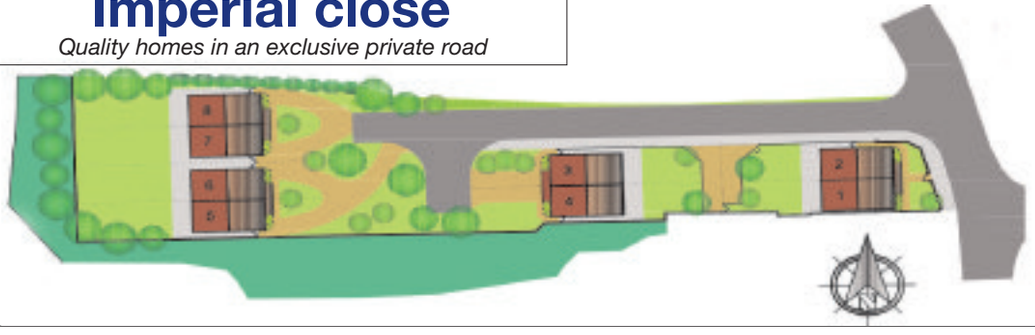

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Goofy and wacky but the Adam works well

By David Banner

The Vauxhall ADAM is undoubtedly one of the more interesting small car choices around. It's hugely customisable both inside and out and looks strong.

There are two 1.4-litre engines with either 87PS or 100PS. We tried the lower powered of the two. Both are mated to a fivespeed manual gearbox which again makes motorway journeys less than ideal as they could benefit from a longer gear for better refinement and economy.

The engine is 'tried and tested' which means it's a little long in the tooth and needs working to get the best from it. Go with the 87PS unit and you'll see 62mph appear on the clocks in 12.5 seconds on the way to a top speed of 110mph. In comparison, the 100PS engine's numbers are 11.5s and 125mph.

The ADAM incorporates a 'floating' roof which is visually disconnected from the body and which works particularly well with two-tone colour schemes.

It looks like no other Vauxhall but still incorporates a bunch of existing styling cues such as the Astra's wing-shaped chrome grille bar and the blade shape in the lower doors.

Like MINI, Vauxhall is looking to appeal to the customer's sense of individuality in the sheer amount of colour combinations and materials. Wheels range from 16 inches in size for entry-level cars and there are 17-inch options further up the range.

Unlike many cars which offer striking exterior designs but an interior that betrays a sudden curtailment of development budget, the cabin of the ADAM is, if anything, even bolder than the exterior. There's extensive use of body-coloured trim inserts, not only on the dashboard but also reaching along the centre console and onto the steering wheel and these can give the interior a real riotous personality. You can even swap them out for a different colour or finish if you get bored.

A seven-inch touch screen interface is the big point of interest from a technological perspective. It's both iPhone and Android compatible and can access internet-downloaded apps.

Where specified, the navigation and infotainment controls are all marshalled by the touch screen. There's even a choice of headlining, including an LED-lit starlight roof trim.

The exterior colours include 'I'll be Black', 'Papa don't Peach', 'Purple Fiction', 'James Blonde', 'Saturday White Fever' and 'Buzz Lightgreen'.

Trims

The ADAM has three trim levels, JAM (fashionable/colourful), GLAM (elegant/sophisticated) and SLAM (racy/sporty) and both 1.4-litre engines are available with all three trim levels.

JAM opens with air conditioning, a CD DAB radio with USB, AUX-in and Bluetooth, a leather trimmed steering wheel with deco elements, cruise control and infotainment control. Go for the GLAM and there's electronic climate control, front & rear LED lights, a fixed glazed sunroof and an exterior chrome pack. SLAM weighs in with 17-inch alloy wheels, Morrocana sports seats, and a two tone roof and darkened rear glass.

The latest generation ESP system is standard on all ADAMs and it also includes a Hill Start Assist function. That wonderful star-effect roof and a heated steering wheel are options that differentiate the Vauxhall from the run of the mill city car contenders and these surprise and delight features are key in a market that's not always led fully by upfront pricing.

Talking of which, prices for the 1.4-litre models open at just over £11,500 and top out at little over £14,000. What's more, the options prices have been kept very reasonable so should you really want to stamp your own impression on the car, it won't cost you the earth nor destroy the residual value of the car.

Unless, that is, you go for a distinctly questionable colour combination!

Right, pay attention here because things get a little more involved.

You remember I said there were two versions of the 1.4-litre engine. I lied. Only a little but there are in fact four. Each version of the 1.4-litre is available in either a standard guise or as an ecoFLEX version with Stop/Start. This clearly has the biggest impact on emissions.

Vauxhall reckons there are over a million different combinations of options – it's a car without parallel. Remember, there's something about coolness which involves taking yourself quite seriously and not everybody wants to do that with their car.

Sometimes it's fun to just be a bit goofy and not care and the ADAM fulfils that requirement perfectly with its wacky paint finishes, decals and interchangeable trim parts.

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• All Pointing Work
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• 20 Year Guarantee
• 25 Years Experience
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• All genuine quotes beaten
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FREE Estimates
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ROOFING SAFE LTD
Tiling, Slating, Repair, Care and Maintenance.
Flat roof refurbishment and repairs
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ALL ASPECTS OF ROOFING COVERED
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Mobile: 07403 380136
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To advertise your business and reach more than 72,000 potential customers...
1 Call us on... 01543 465341
2 E-mail us at... sarah.winfield@expressandstar.co.uk
3 Post to... Sarah Jones, Walsall Chronicle, Queen Square, Cannock. WS11 1ES

Local Specialists

Plastering

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For competitive quotes on all your refurbishment needs on plastering, boarding, overboarding, partitions, re-skimming and artex covering

No job too small Quality rendering and terrolining.

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Need a plumber or jobs doing around the house?

Give Ian a call

I fit Bathrooms, Kitchens, Outside Taps, Flat Pack, etc.

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CLIFF THE PLUMBER

24 Hour Callout

No Job Too Small
Leaking Pipes
Radiators & Tanks Fitted
Bathroom Suites Fitted
Also Gutter Repairs & Fascias
FREE QUOTES
10% OFF for Pensioners
Family business for 35 years

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Daytime: 07836 577269

L. Smith Plumbing

24 hr Call Out

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Leaking pipes, Taps, Ball Valves Repair and Re-new, Radiators, Toilets etc. Gutters, Repair and Fascias
Free Quotes
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Anytime
01543 479468

Pauls Home Services LTD

Condensing Boilers
Radiators • Upgrades
Gas Work • Full Heating Breakdowns
Bathrooms • Cloakrooms
• Kitchens • Plumbing
• Tiling • Showers
• Electrics • Plastering
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ALL WORK GUARANTEED

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SIM HEATING SOLUTIONS

SPECIAL OFFER

Complete central heating installation
A Rated (Combi boiler, 7 rads) from £1900
LPG Work Now Being Undertaken
A Rated Boiler Change from £950
Tank System to Combi Boiler from £1100

- Gas Fire & Cookers Fitted
- Radiators Changed
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300347

oven cleaning

OVENBUSTER

Domestic Oven Cleaning
Ovens-Hobs-Ranges
✓Professional ✓Low Odour ✓
Excellent Results

Are you ready for Christmas?

www.ovenbuster.com

FREE QUOTES
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We're here to make advertising better.

(Not to make better advertising. Sorry.)

Here at the Advertising Standards Authority, we judge ads on whether they're harmful, misleading, or offensive. Not on whether they're funny, clever or they look good. Which is just as well, really.

Telephone 020 7492 2222 www.asa.org.uk

ASA
Keeping advertising standards high

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1. Call us on... 01543 465341
2. E-mail us at... sarah.winfield@expressandstar.co.uk
3. Post to... Sarah Jones, Walsall Chronicle, Queen Square, Cannock. WS11 1ES

GET CUSTOMERS MOVING ADVERTISE

Advertisements in local newspapers and websites are the most popular way of keeping an eye on the property market

SOURCE: The Newspaper Society - Consumer Catalyst 2014

Classified Ads

Buy Local, **Sell** Local

Index

1 Family
2 Leisure Time
3 Home & Services
4 Pets & Animals
5 Business & Farming
6 Property
7 Jobs
8 Motoring
9 Local Information
10 Personals

FreeAds

IT'S FREE IT'S EASY

For items up to **£250**

VISIT:

www.expressandstar.com/bookanad

Simply press the free ad icon.
Sorry, no pets, guns or livestock.
Private advertisers only.

Telephone line opening times over the festive period.

Monday, December 22	8.30am -5.30pm
Tuesday, December 23	8.30am – 5.30pm
Christmas Eve, Wed 24	8.30am till 2pm
Christmas Day, Thurs 25	Closed
Boxing Day, Friday 26	Closed
Saturday, December 27	Closed as normal
Monday, December 29	8.30am – 5.30pm
Tuesday, December 30	8.30am – 5.30pm
New Years Eve, Wed 31	8.30am till 2pm
New Years Day, Thurs 1	Closed
Friday, January 2	8.30am – 5.30pm
Saturday, January 3	Closed as normal

Please note that our deadlines will be subject to change considerably over the Christmas period. Please call 01902 317 878 for any further information.

funeral directors

Jennings
Funeral Directors
www.jenningsfunerals.co.uk

We are proud to have been serving the local community of Wolverhampton since 1848

Providing a choice of funerals and memorials to suit all budgets. Our friendly arrangers can also offer help and advice with pre-paid funeral planning.

For your nearest branch or to arrange a home visit please call **01922 712153**

Peter Harrison, Funeral Director

Here for you, whenever you need us, 24 hours a day.

Turn To Us For Help and Support

In your time of need we'll take care of all the funeral arrangements.

- Est. 1907
- 24 hour service

G. Gibbs
Funeral Directors
44 All Saints Way
West Bromwich B71 1PZ
0121 553 0442

Dignity
Part of Dignity plc. A British Company.

1 Family

elderly & disabled

MOBILITY SCOOTER, Apex rapid, as new, unused, £450. Genuine reason for sale, cost over £1,000. 01543 422218.

WREKIN STAIRLIFTS reconditioned lifts from £799. New available. 01952 405397/07897 273617

2 Leisure Time

bikes

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SALE! SALE! SALE!
End Of Year Stock Clearance. Massive Reductions On Cycles To Clear. Book For Christmas Now At Sale Price. All Spares And Accessories At Unbeatable Prices.
UP TO 50% OFF WHILE STOCK LASTS!
HATELEY'S
Simply the best
Ring Dave on
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458 Stafford Road, Oxley, Wolverhampton

caravans / motorhomes

CARAVAN FOR SALE
12ft Caravan on a 12 mth or 10½ mth season, on a gorgeous Welsh beach. £7,995 inc free site fees.
Call Caroline: 07825 134866

CARAVANS & CHALETS For sale with seaviews. Clarach Bay near Aberystwyth from £4995 includes 2015 site fees. Call Phil on: 01970 820579. sales@clarachbay.com

LUXURY Caravans for sale. Mid wales coast 12 month season. Family and pet friendly, near beach. All contents & fees inc for 2015 just £17,995. Call Cari 07837 489013.

STATIC CARAVAN FOR SALE, 12 month season, no age limit, pool, bar and full ents programme, 2015 fees inc for just £11,495. Call Damian 07581 559740.

STATIC CARAVAN FOR SALE, 2 beds, dg, ch, Near Aberystwyth, no age limit, 12 month season, lots of facilities and close to beach, £19,995. Call Paul 07960 944721.

caravans wanted

ALL CARAVANS WANTED
Any Age or Condition
CASH
WAITING
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Call Bob on 07787 833833

sports & leisure

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For items upto £250.
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holidays

caravan holidays

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mind, body & soul

clairvoyance

PSYCHIC TAROT READINGS Live 1 to 1. 0906 757 0900 75p per min, calls recorded. Credit/Debit card 0141 427 7003 (£25 - 30 mins).

slimming aids

INCH LOSS with Slim Fit - book now for one free treatment (t/c). 01902 546134, see www.slimfitclinic.com

what's on

toy & train fair

TOY AND TRAIN COLLECTOR'S FAIR
OAK PARK LEISURE CENTRE
Lichfield Road, Walsall Wood (A461)
Sunday 4th January 2015
10.30 am - 3.00 pm
OVER 65 TABLES
Toys, Cars and Trains, etc.
Old and New
Admission: Adults £1.50 Seniors £1.20 Children 60p
TRANSTAR PROMOTIONS
(01922) 643385

3 Home & Services

furniture

INSTANT CASH PAID!!
For leather chesterfields, settees, chairs & footstools.
ANY CONDITION
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BFC FURNITURE
MELTDOWN SALE NOW IN FULL SWING
Open Everyday 10am-6pm
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HUGE SAVINGS

Single matts ..... from £19
Divan beds....Singles from £49 Doubles £69
Ortho matts ..Singles from £69 Doubles £99
Memory foam matts ..... from £99
Faux leather bed frames .....
doubles half price £89 .....
Ottoman bed frames..... from £199
Bunk frames £99
Metal fashion bed frames ..... from £49

Recliner sofas MANY HALF PRICE
Leather and fabric chairs ..... from £29
Sofas ..... from £99
Suites ..... from £249

BFC FACTORY OUTLET
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2 MINS FROM NEW TESCO & TOBY CARVERY
0121 557 6885
OPEN 7 DAYS - MON-SAT 10-6. SUN 10-4.

SOFA, CHAIR, LEATHER
Dark brown, 3 seater, manual recliner, also auto recliner chair.
£490.
01989 565062.

in your garden

AT C B SHEDS & FENCING We supply/fit. Free quotes. Supply sleepers & decking 01922 720270.

SAND, TOPSOIL, DECORATIVE gravels 11 Tonne direct loads at cheap rates. D. Gill Building & Garden Supplies 01922 452221/ 452266 7 days.

SLABS 450mm x 450mm Riven faced, only £1.68 inc. VAT. Ranton Building Supplies: 01543 276006.

items for sale

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

ASH RECLAMATION new and used building materials, upvc doors and windows 01543 453222.

CHEAP BRICKS £12 per 100 inc VAT, also red hand made brick, £28.90 per 100 inc VAT. Prices to clear. Ranton Building Supplies Limited, Cannock 01543 276006.

CANNOCK EXCHANGE
We buy & sell quality used goods: Car audio, Air Rifles, TVs & Laptops, Bikes, Gold, Guitars & Amps, Group/Disco Gear etc. Try us! No Furniture.
186 Stafford Rd, Cannock, WS11 4AH
Open Tues to Sat 10am-6pm
01543 570990 Closed Sun & Mon

items wanted

READERS ARE ADVISED to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

WANTED FOR CASH three piece suites, up to £100 paid Call 01785 815925/ 07947 627142

t.v. / home entertainment

service

AERIAL & TV SPECIALISTS
Free Estimates on any TV Repairs, Plasma, LCD, 3D, LED, Projection. All areas covered 8 till late. 7 days. Digital aerials, Sky installation. Wall mounts & TV setups.
07850 330251

specialists at your service

aerials

A1 RAPID AERIALS Plasma fitting, Sky repairs, same day service, free call out, 3 yr g'tee, oap discounts 07960 173589 or 0800 335 899.

AA DIGITAL AERIALS
1 aerial into 2 rooms £90
1 aerial into 4 rooms £130
Work Guaranteed
Same Day Service
01902 858191
01384 429166
01543 439095
01922 716029
07833 738857

alarms/security

PREMIER ALARMS
Supplied and Fitted £195
Servicing and Repairs
12 Months Warranty
All areas covered
All quotes beaten!
Call: 0121 601 9791

bathrooms

JP Builders
Over 20 years experience in bathroom & kitchen installations.
TILING/PLASTERING/FREE QUOTES
07883 339818 or 01922 455489

building services

WALL N ROOF Repairs 07847 764297, 01543 820098 http://www.wallnroof.co.uk/

building supplies

RECLAIMED BRICKS, Tiles, Slates, Oakbeams, Flooring, York Stone. Cawarden 01889 574066. sales@cawardenreclaim.co.uk

antiques

ANTIQUES WANTED
All Furniture, Clocks, China, Medals, Coins, Paintings, Gold & Silver Jewellery
HOUSE CLEARANCE SERVICE
CHASE ANTIQUES
(Over 35 years Trading)
01543 572367 07831 818024

blinds

Amanda for Blinds
Vertical Blind Deals
from
3 for £99 | 5 for £159 | 7 for £179
Great Fabrics : Measured & Fitted
Also Great Deals On..
Wood Venetians : Rollers : Venetians
Romans & Made to Measure Curtains
TEL: 0845 66 7 4 179
www.amandaforblinds.co.uk

AB-Blinds
Super 6
6 Child Safe Verticals Fitted from only £169
Call 0800 0347111
www.ab-blinds.co.uk

carpentry & joinery

Collins
- Kitchen and fitted wardrobe Specialists
- Doors, floors and staircases
- All plastering projects catered for
- Domestic and Commercial
- Refurbishments

www.collinscarpentryandjoinery.co.uk
0121 531 0264 / 07903 234 137

KARNDEAN & AMTICO floors supplied & fitted. Laminate/Wood floors also. Fully insured, 07768 814501

carpet fitters

A CARPETS & VINYLS supplied or just fitted, quality samples brought to your home, no job too small, free quotes call Mark 01543 820598/07941 619694.

cctv

RAPID SECURITY CCTV & alarms cameras, supplied and fitted, domestic and commercial, same day service, free call out. Call Robbi on 07960 173589 or 0800 335 899.

double glazing

UPVC BACK DOORS from £299, front doors from £389 fitted. Windows/Fascia's, 01922 442720.

double glazing repairs

WINDOWS,DOORS,CONSERVATORIES misted, broken units, locks 5 year guarantee. 07983 704889.

driveways & patios

PAVEWAYS
Paving your way
25% OFF WITH THIS ADVERT
Driveways, Patios, Landscaping Specialists
• NO DEPOSIT • PAY ON COMPLETION
5yr guarantee,
fully insured and registered company
01902 275275
www.paveweysuk.co.uk

electrical services

ALL ELECTRICAL work from a switch to a rewire. Insured, free quote 01902 575570 / 07958 627434.

ALL HOME ELECTRICS NAPIT registered. Fully insured. For a free quote call 07583 320318.

MB ELECTRIC.CO.UK Home rewiring from £800. NICEIC.High quality local service call freephone 0800 0263455/07939 503905

MZ ELECTRICAL. A reliable friendly service no job too small. All Domestic / commercial work. Safety Certificates. Call Mat: 07724 424441.

electricians

ELECTRICIAN NICEIC all electrical work: rewires etc. Quality work at low prices. Over 25 years' exp. 01902 206987, 07891 998125.

external rendering

A FULL 15 YEAR GUARANTEE on all rendering work. Call for a free quote: Call 01902 366221.

fitted bedrooms

MADE TO MEASURE Sliding Wardrobes. 07813 675526. www.interiorsbyrobertstokes.com

gas fitting

GAS SERVICES
- Boilers
- Cookers
- Fires
- Gas Checks
- Landlord Certificates
- Gas Leaks Traced

Fitted, Serviced and Repaired
Same Day Service
Free Quotes
DISCOUNTS FOR OAPs
Call: 01902 366855/ 07761 973975

D J Gas
Servicing and installtion of boilers, cooker and fires. Landlord Certs
Gas Safe
Call Dan 07818 047772

gates

ALL GATES,RAILINGS, etc. Free quotes, also repairs & fitting. 07903 500642 24 hours.

guttering

GUTTERING Replacement, repair and cleaning. Free quotes. Call: 07717 753302 or 01902 782530.

handyman services

HANDY MAN - Most trades covered, plumbing, heating, gardening and gutter cleaning. 07850 559315.

house clearances

HARVEY'S HOUSE / SHOP CLEARANCES
Cash waiting, Any size
Quick, discreet
and professional service
Call: 07939 421862 / 01902 410433

A ABSOLUTE BEST cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. 07852 172641 / 07710 360327

A1 HOUSE CLEARANCE
Full, part and single rubbish removed.
Garage and sheds cleared.
Ercol and Teak furniture wanted
Call now on: 01922 492007

kitchen fitters

THE KITCHEN FITTER Over 15 years experience. Call 07881 654757 or 01543 373233.

painters / decorators

C I PAINTING & DECORATING Over 30 yrs experience.City & Guilds approved. Free Quotes. 01902 683678 / 07890 879 892.

C&D DECORATING Coving/ dado/ laminated flooring. Free quotes/ OAP discount. 07973 286288

plans prepared

ADAM DESIGN, Building Plans. Drawn and submitted to council. Tel: 01902 620200 / 07841 654037. Email: adamdesign@sky.com

BUILDING Plans: Prepared/submitted. K J Bradley 01902 373248 07792 165767. www.plans4u.co.uk

plastering

D & P PLASTERING
Quality work assured.
30 years experience
07939 140401,
07891 119150,
01902 688575

plumbing & heating

A RELIABLE PLUMBER no job too small, no call out fee. Call Lee: 07713 149278 / 01902 330351.

AA HEATING & Plumbing, Kitchen/Bathrooms.Install/Service/ Repair all gas work: 01922 660410

PLUMBING WORK UNDERTAKEN No job too small or large. Call Will for a quote on: 07521 411108.

oven cleaning

VITAL OvenCleaners: Ranges,Agas BBQ's etc: 07500 257089/0190272 2937.www.vitalovencleaners.co.uk

reclaimed materials

CUNNINGHAM RECLAMATION Buyers & sellers of reclaimed & new building materials. 01543 275299

removals

A & M CHEAP REMOVALS
Local
Careful Firm
Full or Part loads
Call Don:
0800 587 0377
or 07749 941319

A MAN WITH A VAN Single items, flat/house removals/clearances, local/nationwide. Call Steve 0121 422 2999 or 07815 043724

ALL REMOVALS We beat any quote, full or part loads, all areas. Call Keith on 07867 862227

CALL DEAN! Business/Domestic, Deliveries/Relocation/full house 1 item.07429 453209 / 01902 830870 01384 940260 / 01922 263460.

CALL PETE - MAN WITH A VAN, Removals, clearances. Items large or small. Call: 01902 741546 or 07899 635852.

DJ REMOVALS house or one item. Affordable rates, reliable. Call: 01902 652346 or 07912 980177.

roofing

CLIFF NICHOLLS
Roofing & Scaffolding
All Roofing and Scaffolding Work carried out.
30 years experience
Freephone
(0800) 220 -729

MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling, roof repairs, fascias and gutters. Call 01902 238989 / 07580 465449.

skip hire

A absolute affordable skip
RUSSELL SKIPS
Mini, midi skips
Prompt delivery / collection
(0121) 520 3388 / 07721 387990

QUICKA SKIPS
Mini, Midi, 6 Yard with doors and Builders.
7 days - Prompt Service
01902 404800 / 07983 580884

Waste management
SB
Recycling services
01902 459667
0121 558 2120
01543 500 599

AAA SKIP HIRE All sizes available, competitive prices. Call Now: 01922 711411 or 07831 105695

GOLDSHILL SKIPS
Bring your own waste cheaper than skips. General, Green, Wood waste any size vehicle. Phone for prices:
0121 557 3346

COX GRAB HIRE1 load = 3 skips, £160 per load. Call 07754 111141 www.coxgrabhire.co.uk

GRINSELLS SKIP HIRE LTD. Mini, midi, maxi, large skips. Fast, friendly & reliable service. Monday to Saturday, 6 day service. Call: 0121 555 6060.

upholstery

ABANDON NOT!
ESTABLISHED OVER 98 YEARS
Your three piece suite, settee, odd chair etc, re-upholstered or repaired as new.
Fully guaranteed service.
E MARSH
Showroom - Elm House, Princess Street, W'ton
01902 712484
01902 424296

MR B'S UPHOLSTERY
Re-Upholstering of Sofas, Dining Furniture, Caravans, Car Retrims and more.
www.mrbsupholstery.co.uk
01543 599677
07738 851661

4 Pets & Animals

equestrian corner

ALL READERS are advised to check if Horses have the required Passport information.

LAURAS TACK BOX For all your Horsey needs. Large stockist of new and second hand goods. Call: 07949 943933/ 01543 277688

guns & dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

pets corner

GREYHOUNDS MAKE WONDERFUL PETS
All neutered, innoculated and chipped.
Call Greyhound Trust
01922 412212 or
www.rgtwolverhampton.co.uk

CAARS ANIMAL RESCUE
Registered Charity
Dogs, cats, puppies & kittens accepted for rehoming.
Call: 01922 476208.
Red Lane, Off Crab Lane
Essington, WV11 2DZ.
OPEN MONDAY TO SUNDAY 9am

NOTICE TO READERS
Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

PEDIGREE CHIHUAHUA puppy, black, male, Ready now. 07952 926466.

vets

Express & Star
THIS SPACE COULD BE PROMOTING YOUR BUSINESS
Every day our customers get a great response from Classified Advertising.
So could you by calling our friendly experienced Sales Advisors on 01902 319191.

5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering any obligations.

6 Property

properties wanted

BUILDER NEEDS TO BUY
NEXT HOUSE TO REFURB
CASH WAITING
Call Terry on 01922 430812

WE PAY 100% Of Purchase Price for your home. Call Missing Link 0800 488 0063 Free 24/7

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

accommodation to let

J9
No Deposit
"Move In Today"
Studios from £90pw*
Rooms from £60pw*
*Includes Most Bills
D.S.S.
Welcome
Check Website - Live List
All Black Country
01902 21 31 21
J9accommodation.com
Mutual Landlord Accreditation Scheme

NOTICE TO READERS It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

7 Jobs

courses

BILLY THOMAS HGV Driver Training
DSA QUALIFIED INSTRUCTORS
HGV C+E (ARTIC) & C (RIGID)
7.5T (C1) SMALL LORRY
CAR & TRAILER (B+E)
MINIBUS (D1)
1-2-1 TRAINING
INITIAL CPC TRAINING & ADR
CPC Periodic Training for PCV & LGV from 7hr blocks - Full 35hrs
01902 744726 / 07831 646601

ADR with 28 Hours Driver CPC £460 fully inc. Available 7days. SDH Training 01902 455677

BIRMINGHAM 21-22 FEBRUARY | **COVENTRY** 18-19 MARCH | **TAMWORTH** 8-9 APRIL
Learn how to take blood
TRAIN AS A PHLEBOTOMIST
Introduction to Phlebotomy
◆ TWO DAY ACCREDITED COURSES
◆ NATIONALLY RECOGNISED
HIGH DEMAND IN HOSPITALS, G.P. SURGERIES, COMMUNITY, PRIVATE SECTOR, MILITARY, ETC.
Book online or more info: www.geopace.com
No previous experience or qualifications required

full time - general

SALES COUNTER PERSON for busy architectural ironmongers. Some knowledge of ironmonger/ fixings & fastenings essential. Apply in writing to:Steve Mills, Locks & Fittings Ltd, Unit 7/8, Rolling Mill Industrial Estate, Rolling Mill Street, Walsall, WS2 9EQ

8 Motoring

cars under £1500

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED that the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

FIAT PUNTO, 2004, 64,000 miles, grey, e/w, MoT, central locking, pas, psh, immobiliser, MP3/Aux stereo, £1,295 ono. 01902 256478.

FORD FOCUS 1.6, 2004, MoT'd, dark blue with leather trim. £625 0121 502 1279.

MERCEDES E430 1999, silver, 74,000 genuine miles, 12 months MoT, FSH, lovely condition, £1,350. 07970 992872.

cars over £1500

FIAT PANDA ELEGANZA, 2004, 56,000 miles, baby blue, MoT, very clean, a/c, fsh, £2,000. 07522 475039.

commercial vehicles

BARGAIN VANS Small & large £995 - £5995 inc vat 12 months MoT. 01902 451877 / 07944 640999.

driving tuition

Homer's
Mini, Clio, Corsa, Fiesta, Punto, 207, KA, Fiat 500, Yaris.
10 Hours £89! Five Hours £50!
2 Hours £20! All Areas Covered
MALE & FEMALE INSTRUCTORS
MANUAL & AUTOMATIC
ADI/PDI REQUIRED. Gift vouchers available.
07970 200066 / 01922 780250
01562 870050 / 01384 234954
01543 660120 / 0121 564 0090
01902 580065
www.homersdrivingschool.co.uk

motorbikes

CHASE MOTORCYCLE TRAINING
■ CBT to Direct Access
■ P/T instrucors Always Required
CALL US NOW
0845 757 3402
www.chasemotorcycletraining.co.uk

NFL MOTORCYCLE TRAINING CBT to full licence. Call 8am - 9pm for deals 01902 494422.

scrap vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

BJ CARS PAYS MORE
www.bjcars.co.uk
Scrap it legally, NO fines, NO comebacks.
All scrap cars/vans wanted
Best Prices!
01902 498542
01902 658792 EVE

A B SPARES
Pays More
All Scrap Cars & Vans Wanted
Anything Considered
Free Collection
Scrap It Legally COD. Given Instant Payment.
01902 493110 / 0121 525 5813 daytime
01902 659775 evenings

MCB
TOP PRICES PAID FOR ALL SCRAP CARS, VANS, BIKES, CLASSICS
Tel: 01902 408176
1000's of parts available at all times
MONMORE RD. WV1 2TZ

SCRAPCARBUYERS.CO.UK
TOP PRICES PAID
0800 533 5139
0121 526 4666
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9 Local Information

public & legal notices

Walsall Council, Planning and Building Control

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) act 1990 Development Management Procedure Order 2010 (as amended)

The below applications have been made to the Walsall Council. Applications can be viewed at First Stop Shop, Civic Centre, Walsall or online www.walsall.gov.uk/planning. Representations can be made online, email: planningservices@walsall.gov.uk or in writing to Head of Planning and Building Control, Civic Centre, Darwall Street, Walsall, WS1 1DG. Representations should be made within 21 days of the date of this notice.

Please note: Your letter and personal details will form part of the planning file which is a public document and will be available for inspection at the Council Offices. The information may be released as part of a request under the Freedom of Information Act.

14/1596/FL Bromford FOR: Replacement windows and doors AT: 10, 10A Wolverhampton Road, 80 New Street and 2 Shugborough Close, Walsall, WS3 2EZ

14/1789/FL New River Retail Property FOR: Erection of a single storey convenience store with associated car parking, landscaping and ATM machine AT: BELL INN P.H.,BELL LANE,WALSALL,WS3 2NJ

14/1874/PATEL Hutchinson & EE Ltd For: Replacement 15m Telecoms Tower and associated works. AT: LAND AT ENTRANCE TO LANDFILL SITE, BENTLEY LANE, WALSALL

10 Personals

personal

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general

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Women seeking men

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AMANDA 5ft 4ins slim fit attractive, enjoys the outdoors, nice wine, theatre etc. seeking romantic considerate soul mate to broaden my horizons. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415391**

LUCY, broadminded 18yrs seeks discreet fun with men any age. Aca. **Tel No: 0905 002 1941 Box No: 365051**

SAM attractive single mum who really enjoys life and likes to be happy WLTM genuine single male/dad for mutual companionship, dates in/out and tlc. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415381**

SEXY brunette, mid 20's busty, adventurous broad minded seeks no strings fun. **Tel No: 0905 002 1949 Box No: 361739**

KAREN medium build, blonde hair, 5ft 5ins, seeks male, 50-58, GSOH, loving, caring and understanding. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415429**

SALLY, 38yrs large cuddly lady seeks slim men for discreet meetings. **Text Only 4550193**

23YR old Asian female, seeks sugar daddy, any age for fun and much more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415367**

TRUDY 36yrs, wltm broadminded men of any age/area for daytime meetings. **Text Only 4550194**

YOUNG looking female, likes rock music, concerts, theatre, seeks Rock male with similar interests for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415249**

MELANIE, 38, slim, blonde and bored. Call if you want no strings fun. **Text Only 4550198**

MANDY very attractive, slim single mum 36yrs, employed, OHAC, looking to share some quality times with similar genuine kind hearted social male/dad. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415409**

JENNI, 52 bored housewife wants no strings fun with younger chap. **Text Only 4550197**

GEM 34yr old pretty brunette with lovely big eyes and nice skin, many interests, WLTM kind tallish male, 30-50yrs for serious relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415571**

50 year old widow, love reading, walking, horse riding, clay shooting, swimming & keep fit, 5ft 5 blond hair, gsoh looking for similar male. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4435776**

SYLVIA attractive blonde size 12 45yr old female looking for genuine companionship, someone to spend quality times with, enjoy music and cosy times together. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415543**

FEMALE looking for male any age for fun, meet ups, friendship and take it from there. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4550576**

HOME alone far too often, attractive bubby fun good time girl 32yrs seeking male 30-50yrs for broadminded daytime fun. Let's rid the boredom! **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415523** tt

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel No: 0905 002 1883 Box No: 413399**

SUE attractive, independent, confident female, sporty, petite, loves the Arts, good books, looking for romantic, sensitive nice guy for nice times together. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415501**

LUCY, 32yrs, blonde lady seeks naughty boys of any age for no strings fun. **Tel No: 0905 002 1887 Box No: 413443**

KAREN medium build, blonde hair, 5ft 5ins, seeks male, 50-58, GSOH, loving, caring and understanding. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415429**

ADVENTUROUS sexy lady, 38yrs, married but seeks no strings fun with discreet man, any age. I'm tall, slim and dominant. Aca. **Tel No: 0905 002 1937 Box No: 415301**

GOOD looking professional lady, 56, enjoys the arts, country walks, meals out, seeks compatible, genuine, professional gent to enjoy the good things in life. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415007**

ANGIE 38yrs slim blonde, ex model with lovely long legs with shapely figure, fit, toned, sporty, confident but warm, WLTM similar perceptive, sensitive individual for ltr. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414723**

BECKY stunning big blue eyed 38yr old honest, caring and fun person looking for nice times with similar outgoing fun guy, status/age unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414391**

68YR old widow, attractive, seeks sincere, N/S male, likes reading, meals out and walks. West Midlands. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414773**

NICOLA 32, blue eyes, petite, pretty brunette, shy at first, trustworthy, caring, varied hobbies, seeks male/single dad up to 40yrs for tlc possible ltr. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414707**

TARA 22 tall slim but curvy with legs that go all the way up to heaven, WLTM very appreciative confident male for adult fun. Contact me anytime. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414701**

KAREN petite 34yr old attractive blonde, likes pubs, clubs, meals out, gym, looking for honest caring guy who can make me laugh. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414373**

CATH 37yr old very bored housewife seeking bored male for some fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414497**

ANN looking for no strings adult fun, broadminded and great fun, blonde, attractive and discreet. Call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414363**

JANE 5ft5ins blue eyed attractive curvy mature student with happy disposition, enjoys meals or drinks in/out, keeping fit, walking, seeking genuine fun male with GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414229**

ARE you Mr Wonderful? Lesley attractive slim auburn haired fit lady who loves life and fully intends to live it to the full, seeking similar caring, patient man. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414213**

KATY 26 slim beautiful discreet blue eyed blonde looking for mature gent for some uncomplicated fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414209**

ANNABELLE 29 slim tanned beautiful sophisticated sensual brunette, loves the high life, Champaign lunches, weekends away, seeks very own sugar daddy for sweet nothings. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414191**

SUSAN 64, lively, seeking male for friendship, maybe more. **0906 500 3955 Box No: 411329**

DIANE attractive singleton seeks male to have some fun with, meals out, cinema, dancing and just see were things lead from there. Age/race unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415373**

SHELIA Asian 20yr old female, very pretty, feminine with long hair, enjoys nights in or out, seeking mature white male 55plus for discreet fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415181**

MARGARET 39, attractive active female likes animals, reading, meals in/out, seeking considerate partner for good laughs, companionship, shared interests and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414727**

KAREN 50, widow, likes swimming, horse riding, keep fir, clay pigeon shooting, GSOH, N/S, non drinker, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415211**

BUBBLY larger than life 28yr old blonde bombshell, seeks large built male to fulfil my every fantasy! Give me a call; I will totally make your day maybe even your year. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414977**

BARBARA 38 slim sporty attractive blonde, varied interests, single and ready to date, seeks kind honest guy for shared interests, fun nights out, hopefully leading to more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414967**

JULIE single petite attractive big blue eyed brunette, loves cooking a cosy meal in, nights out, searching for real love with genuinely nice guy. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414491**

MAZ 36 petite curvy big blue eyes, loves music, beach walks, cosy nights with good conversation and nice wine, seeks similar likeminded male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413571**

HELEN feisty redhead with many interests including beach walks and quiet nights in, looking for male with GSOH and a passion for travel. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413869**

ANN slim attractive widowed but not past being loved lady, loves travel, country good conversation, WLTM kind genuine male, 35-65 for ltr. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413453**

JANET tall beautiful brunette, slim 12, separated, enjoys life, no hang ups, wanting quality time, friendship and possible romance with similar guy. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413415**

ANITA seeking nice man in the West Midlands, 50-70 for companionship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413765**

SARAH 38yr old bored blonde seeking single guys up for some good times, chats and discreet meets. Looking forward to hearing from you. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414177**

EMS 32yrs petite young looking, pretty, likes swimming, walking, talking etc, seeking honest bloke or dad up to 40yrs for fun adult friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413853**

NATALIE 22yrs attractive brunette nurse, very slim, athletic figure, many likes, few dislikes, WLTM male up to 38yrs to stay at home and have some fun with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413839**

First 3 messages received are free; thereafter £1.50. Text STOP to 89990 to exit at any time.

ROSA 27 sexy senorita seeking older handsome prince charming to whisk me off my feet, enjoy fun times, improve my English and fall in love with. Age/race unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412927**

RITA attractive blonde with a very kind heart seeks special man to share my life with. Please get in touch if like me you are fed up with always being the single friend. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412987**

JAN 5ft8ins slim pretty lady in great shape, open-minded, laidback, GSOH, OHAC, many interests, WLTM someone for cuddling up with and to share good and bad times. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412911**

ANN slim attractive N/S lady who is easy to get along with, looking for romantic interesting man for new adventures together, hopefully ltr. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412911**

VICKY 37yr professional, mum to one, sensual and very attractive, looking for a real man, tall, fit, sincere and passionate to enjoy each other's company. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411695**

SONYA slim attractive vibrant lady with GSOH, social nature, fit/active, WLTM N/S male up to 60yrs for romantic genuine respectful relationship, loving. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413441**

EMMA petite slim blue eyed blonde 22yrs. likes cinema, dancing/music, just chillin, seeking easygoing male for fun and good times but nothing serious. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413207**

EUROPEAN beauty romantic, caring, attentive, looking for loving male to enjoy warm loving relationship with, call me to find out more. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413013**

KAREN 34 blue/green eyed size 12 attractive brunette who loves pubs, cosy nights in, kids, seeking special honest guy/dad for poss ltr. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413005**

ATTRACTIVE slim brunette, 47, N/S, seeks tall, slim male for a cut above the average relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412725**

KAREN pretty blonde, short in stature, big personality, keeps fit, loves dogs, seeking honest, caring male who can make me laugh. Nothing too serious just fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412377**

JEAN petite female who enjoys golf, days out, cosy evenings in, holidays, WLTM older male in his 60's with a good personality and big heart. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412359**

LORRAINE 5ft 9ins, slim, 57, nurse, looking for someone to look after me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 410543**

MIXED raced lady, 34, widely travelled, seeking gent, 30-40 for romance. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 408429**

JULIE loving, caring, honest, seeks real gent to share conversation and have a great time, friendship/relationship, who knows? **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412777**

SALLY stunning lady looking for dinner dates, partying and generally having a good time with generous man looking for his mojo! No strings, go on call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412599**

DEBS petite attractive auburn haired, good listener, romantic, enjoys socialising, cosy nights in with Mr Right, seeking similar caring N/S single dad. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412387**

JAN slim curvy professional warm, affectionate, looking to fill full time vacancy with similar male who loves cuddles/kisses and bikes for romance. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412167**

ANNABELL 29 slim sophisticated well travelled interesting sensual fit brunette with lots to offer seeks older male to appreciate and treat me well. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412177**

KAREN slim, tall, attractive 36yr old normal female who likes shopping, socialising, nights in/out seeking thoughtful genuine male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412041**

KIM 25yrs feminine, pretty, big blue eyes, GSOH, varied interests, likes romantic beach walks, cosy nights in, seeking honest loving man for ltr. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411777**

CAROL young 47, caring, loyal, likes music, concerts, cinema, theatre, seeks male with similar interests for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411919**

PROFESSIONAL black lady, likes cooking, music, countryside, seeking honest, reliable gent, possibly farmer for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411763**

JULIE really fun loving slim pretty female 38 looking for nice guy to go out with, get to know and hopefully enjoy a relationship with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411517**

GWENDOLINE honest, trustworthy, seeks caring gent who enjoys cinema, theatre, holidays and nights out for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412293**

DIANE voluptuous curvy and all woman, loves dancing, walking, cosy nights in, WLTM nice man for friendship, hopefully leading to something more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412321**

SARA bored blonde looking for single gents for fun, chats and meets, looking forward to hearing from you, don't be shy. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412055**

EMMA petite young looking 31yr old attractive single brunette, loves walking, talking, music, seeks honest romantic 30-40yrs. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412037**

SUE 34, likes most things in life, even football! looking for my Mr Wonderful thought I would give this a try. Come on what do we have to loose, call me. **0906 500 3955 Box No: 410765**

CAROL slim attractive blonde, sporty, easy going, broadminded looking for likeminded male with plenty of va va voom, 35-45. **0906 500 3955 Box No: 409717**

SUE 38, attractive broadminded attentive, enjoys meals in/out etc, not necessarily looking for Mr Right as Mr Wrong or even Mr Right now could be fun! Call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411049**

ANGIE attractive slim blonde just looking for a lovely spontaneous guy who like me just wants good company and a nice relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 410641**

KATHERINE 35yr old outgoing single female looking to enjoy dates with similar male also looking for fun times in or out. Age, looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 410565**

PAULINE attractive divorced female with no ties, employed with my own home, likes nights in/out, lots of tlc to give to the right person, call me for a chat, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411039**

JEN attractive sensual petite blonde with OHAC seeks confident fit professional male to enjoy and share good times, if that's you pls get in touch. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 410949**

ARE you dark or bald, with hairy chest, well built, educated, verbal, articulate dom or sub, broadminded and ready to be put in your place? Curious to find out more? call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 410637**

LUCY beautiful busty bubbly blonde 32yrs, seeking naughty boy to enjoy the fun side of life with, age, status and looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411691**

LINDA single and living alone, attractive, young looking, bubbly, WLTM similar young at heart companion to be close with, enjoy chats and romantic dates. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 410119**

WIDOW 68, 5ft 5ins, medium build, attractive, likes walks, reading, holidays, seeks sincere, N/S male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411745**

JEAN young at heart lady, active, 70 plus, N/S, GSOH, likes walks, gardening, outings, WLTM sincere, caring male, 69-74 for companionship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411711**

TINA sexy black female looking for healthy distractions with fun adult companion, interested? You won't be disappointed, give me a call. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411519**

LYNNE young looking attractive Indian female with GSOH and down to earth attitude, looking for likeminded male for date nights, hopefully more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411219**

EMMIE 50, attractive brunette, 5ft 3ins, OHAC, likes country walks, music, reading, seeks genuine, friendly, professional male with GSOH for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411281**

RETIRED happy, caring, attractive female, likes gardening, travel, animals, comedy, seeks tall, funny, kind chap, Shropshire. **0906 500 3955 Box No: 411459**

RITA naughty 40's petite pretty female looking for that special man in my life, any age, to get to know and see what happens, you only live once remember! **0906 500 3955 Box No: 410959**

Men seeking women

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras. Texts cost £1.50 per message sent.

MALE seeking fun bubbly female, 21-30. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415473**

JOHN, 42yrs professional genuine gent seeks caring lady to treat as a princess. **Text Only 4550195**

JOHN 46, West Midlands, seeks local black/Asian female, 30-70 for discreet adult fun, can travel. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415591**

JAMES, hard working single dad, late 30's seeks single mum for family days out. **Text Only 4550196**

MALC 50, seeking adventurous, spontaneous, sensual female, 50-65 for adult fun and good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415253**

GENUINE guy looking for uncomplicated fun with lady up to 50 txt only will answer all txt. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4202609**

GENTLEMAN retired, N/S, seeking lady for companionship and sharing good times with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415609**

SHAUN 26 likes walking, singing, music, would like to meet someone my own age for friendship maybe relationship. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4567328**

TRUSTWORTHY fit, active, caring, N/S, easy going male, 68, GSOH, seeks warm, genuine lady, 59-72 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414151**

EXTREMELY genuine! Life's true gent, 54, slim, 5ft 10ins, blue eyes, short hair, N/S, GSOH, seeks female, 41-52. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413925**

JOHN 40's, tall, athletic, active, adventurous, cheeky, tactile, fun, own teeth, loves life, seeks similar fun female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414067**

34YR old slim, dark haired, creative, adventurous, likes music, cycling and photography, seeks likeminded female to share fun and happiness with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 352753**

SEAN 47, 5ft 8ins, average looks, seeking genuine, honest, caring female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413945**

PHIL 57, medium build, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414063**

MALE requiring female company, enjoys evenings in, sports and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414059**

GEORGE 60 seeks Asian/Oriental female for no strings fun and weekends away. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413707**

STEVE 60, seeks slim blonde for no strings fun and weekends away. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413703**

ROBERT 59, N/S, fit, slim, seeks attractive slim female for discreet no strings friendship and fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413655**

ALAN 49, seeks lady for discreet no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413757**

STEPHEN 58, good looking, likes art, travel, seeking female, 50 plus for companionship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412633**

PHIL 57, OHAC, discreet, seeks no strings fun with younger female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414991**

PROFESSIONAL male, 49 looking for fun and good times with voluptuous lady. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4574340**

GARY 6ft 2ins, dark hair, brown eyes, medium build, likes nights in/out, seeks female, 30-50. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414845**

SLIM male, 59, seeks no strings adult fun with broadminded mature woman, 65 plus. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414983**

ROY 6ft 2ins, late 50's, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414775**

SEAN looking for female to share a coffee, pub, clubs and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414549**

GENUINE friendly, N/S professional, honest gent, medium build, GSOH, good heart essential, seeks equivalent lady, 45-60 for company and conversation. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414311**

MATURE male, 6ft, GSOH, fit, active, loving, honest, N/S, seeks female with similar qualities. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414261**

RETIRED male, seeking no strings adult fun and frolics, discretion assured, age/status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413067**

TONY young looking 50, 5ft 8ins, slim, seeks slim rock chick, trendy for dates and LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413049**

KEVIN 53, looking for a friend/partner and a lover. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412869**

NORTH Shropshire male, 67, N/S, solvent, GSOH, likes walks, travel, music, holidays, countryside, seeks N/S lady for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412867**

MAURICE gentleman, 59, gentle, kind, caring, loving, generous, seeks lady with GSOH and similar personality, slim-medium build. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412859**

MALE seeking female companion for outings, friendship and holidays. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412705**

MALCOLM 61, smoker, great personality, likes coach holidays, drives, pubs, meals out, nights out, 60's music, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412523**

TONY 52, dark hair, white male, 6ft, confident, GSOH, seeks black female. Genuine ad. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412481**

TALL 42yr old sincere male, caring, honest, loving, seeking female, 30-40 for fun, friendship and good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412483**

TALL slim gent, 60, seeks slim, attractive lady for no strings relationship. Discretion assured. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412227**

MALE 49, 6ft, seeks lady for discreet fun times. Must accom. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413819**

BLACK guy 68, feels 45, looks 40, seeks female, 58-71, GSOH, genuine, caring for fun times and LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413375**

TALL Indian gent, 53, seeks sensual lady for friendship plus, interesting chap, discreet days in and nights out. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413315**

JOHN 70, tall, slim, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413183**

GENT widower, late 60's, looks younger, GSOH, likes music, good food, country pursuits, seeks female, 50-60 for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413173**

TONY young looking 50's male, 5ft 8ins, many interests, easy going, seeks slim rock chick or similar for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413275**

6FT 1ins slim, dark hair, likes walking, animals, seeking medium build female, 60-80 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413193**

JEFF young 62, N/S, tall, fit, energetic, seeking new female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413053**

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Book on Saddlers history launched

A NEW book on the history of Walsall FC has been released.

Author and historian Mike Bradbury, in conjunction with the club, has announced the release of Birth Of The Saddlers.

It took Mike and his team of researchers two years to unearth the details as they scoured almost a thousand newspapers from the Victorian era to compile the book.

Although there have been one or two attempts to write the history of Walsall FC, Mike was dismayed to find that the first four decades have been ignored by other writers, and many key features are wrong in several well-known books.

Mike had to put some key factors right in his new 290-page publication, saying photos of Walsall Swifts and Walsall Town were the wrong way around in other books and adding he had to correct dozens of players' names previously published.

The author even visited the gravestones of many Walsall Swifts and Walsall Town players to make sure he got the correct birth and death records.

The book is available at £12.99 from Walsall FC shop, Waterstones and Amazon, or from Mike at 19 Calstock Road, Willenhall. Please add £2 p&p.

Geddes' golden goal goes global

Sean Geddes scores his "rabona" goal

A FACTORY worker from the Black Country became an internet sensation with a wonder goal seen by millions of football fans across the world.

Former Walsall and Stourbridge player Sean Geddes netted one of the goals of the season with his 'rabona' effort against Barrow.

The 22-year-old from West Bromwich wrapped his right foot around the back of his left leg to chip the keeper from the edge of the penalty area.

Now at Worcester City, Geddes was also part of the longest penalty shoot-out in FA Cup history. He was on target both in the regulation time and from the spot, in the epic 14-13 second round defeat against League One Scunthorpe. He had previously struck in the shock first round defeat of former winners Coventry City.

Football

Footage of the goal shown by Worcester City through Youtube had 5,000 views in the first 10 hours of going online, going global soon after.

Geddes works as a lathe turner at the engineering firm A&M EDM in Smethwick which makes Formula One and aircraft parts. He has been taken aback by the reaction his goal has received.

"I couldn't believe it, it is mad how people have suddenly picked up on it," he said. "I have got a friend in Norway and he said you are all over the TV."

In terms of the strike itself he admitted: "I couldn't have hit it any better."

Worcester City FC director Rich Widdowson added it had helped to put the club on the map and knew it would be a sensation.

"When you saw it you knew it was a great goal," he said. "We thought it was going to be seen global once it got out.

"It is all over Europe, it has been seen on countless TV channels. People have seen it and seen the football club which is good.

"It has been the talk of the club. He is as cool as a cucumber, he is a good player," he added.

Strikes like this will come as no surprise to those at Stourbridge's War Memorial Ground, who saw Geddes score several stunning goals during his three seasons with the Glassboys following his release from the Saddlers in 2011.

He started his career at Manchester United but was released as a 16 year-old and joined the Saddlers. He then moved onto Stourbridge and now onto Worcester.

Missed doubles costly for Wanderer

WOLVERHAMPTON'S Wayne Jones lamented the three darts that saw him tumble out of the PDC World Championship at the first hurdle following an entertaining see-saw battle with Dean Winstanley at the Alexandra Palace in London.

Despite arguably the most entertaining contest of the competition to that point, The Wanderer suffered more double trouble on the big stage, live on Sky Sports.

In a never-say-die performance, Jones rebounded from a set down to lead 2-1, before Winstanley fought back to claim his place in the second round.

A full set at double eight was all Jones had left to turn the tide in the very last leg and they all went astray, which he believes has been indicative of 2014.

"It just seems that everything that could go wrong does go wrong, at the moment. Luck never seems to go my way," he said.

"I was happy with my performance, really, averaging 95 plus and yet that's only good enough just to tread water in the first round."

"I feel positive, though, so I will go into the New Year preparing for another crack."

Unbeaten run brought to a shuddering end

Kirby Muxloe 3 Walsall Wood 0

A LACKLUSTRE Wood went into the Christmas break on the receiving end of comprehensive defeat by Kirby Muxloe.

The hosts moved up to fourth with this impressive performance. But for Wood it was their first league defeat and they deserved what they got – nothing.

After just one minute the hosts should have gone in front, a quick counter attack saw Pradeep Bahtley released wide left. He cut inside and his vicious low drive was pushed away by keeper Mario Kisiel but fell straight to Dan Sheahan to fire high and wide of an open goal.

On three minutes Corey Currithers cut inside from the Wood left and hit a curling drive just over. A minute later Bahtley raced onto a ball into the left of the box, Jamie Sauntson saving Wood with a superbly timed last-ditch tackle.

Bravely

On 14 minutes a left wing corner was flicked on at the near post for Adam Hohn to power in a header that Kisiel pushed wide of his right hand post. Four minutes later Bahtley worked his way inside after collecting the ball from a left wing throw, powering through two tackles only to finish wildly.

But the hosts did take a deserved lead on 27 minutes. A central free kick was headed out to skipper Ryan Seal who made space and fired a low drive into the left hand corner from 20 yards.

On 34 minutes a right wing run and cross from Craig Deakin was headed on by Leon Taylor, keeper Warren Butlin saving bravely at the feet of Ben Evans.

Six minutes later Bahtley raced into the left of the box

Football

but appeared to be hemmed in by three defenders on the edge of the six-yard box. He somehow got clear with the ball and found the unmarked Sheahan at the near post to fire home number two.

After 58 minutes Andre Gonzales made space wide left, his ball inside was laid back by Taylor into the path of Currithers to hit a first time effort too high. Two minutes later a lovely through ball from Harry Harris was collected at pace by Tom Evans on the right side of the box, but Butlin and three defenders kept him out.

On 79 minutes Bahtley came in from wide left, his low cross was hit first time by Sheahan and was deflected just the wrong side of the post.

Wood's relief was short-lived, however as three minutes later Sheahan flicked the ball inside from a quickly taken left wing throw to find Ball who curled a shot into the far corner, to wrap the game up, bringing Wood's two-month unbeaten league run to a shuddering halt in the Leicestershire mud.

Wood were taking on Boldmere St Michaels on Boxing Day before welcoming Stourport Swifts on New Year's Day.

Quiet lad Khan packs a punch in the ring

Ibrahim Khan claimed an England Development junior title

WALSALL WOOD Boxing Club have signed off for 2014 by claiming their seventh national title in as many years.

The fight factory on Lichfield Road in Brownhills churned out another champion, from the unlikely source of quiet teenager Ibrahim Khan, who beat Mohammed Kizeer Amed, from Broad Street in London, at Merlin's Nightclub on the Isle of Sheppey.

The 16-year-old, a pupil at Joseph Leckie Academy in Walsall, turned a razor-thin points decision his way in the last 30 seconds of their England Development junior championships final.

With that he joined Matthew Parsons, hat-trick hero Daniel Breeze, Joseph Stevenson and Lauren Johnson in the club's Hall of Fame.

Trainer Shaun Healy said: "Who would have thought it? He started to come and train here a year ago, he barely says a word but he's got tools in the ring.

"He's deceptively strong, fit and determined and that's what won him the fight.

"He's got something he can build on now and he can expect to be busy next year.

"He will step up to the senior development competition and join Class A, maybe even Class B if he's had 10 fights by next autumn.

"Whatever happens, no one can ever take what he has achieved. I couldn't be more proud of him."

Skipper: Cain more than able

CAPTAIN Adam Chambers has hailed the "frightening" potential of Michael Cain after the midfielder's loan stay at Walsall was extended.

The Saddlers secured the services of the 20-year-old Leicester City man for a further month. He will remain at the Banks's until January 17.

Cain has been at the club since October and has impressed veteran Chambers. The Saddlers skipper said: "Michael came in and right from his first game was excellent.

"He is a very talented lad, who is still very young and is only going to get better – that's the frightening thing.

"He has many years ahead of him and I think he is going to do very well for himself. He's very gifted but doesn't mind putting his foot in."

Manager Dean Smith said: "It's a real boost to be able to further extend Michael's loan."

Teen darts star holds his Owen

UP-AND-COMING darts star Owen Maiden proved a bright spot as West Midlands fell to a 14-3 defeat at Essex.

The 14-year-old was playing in the under-18s side but produced a 28.63 average to claim a win in his side's 7-2 loss. Reece Colley bagged the other victory.

West Midlands Girls went down 3-0 and the under-21s lost 4-1, Kristian Wharton denying Essex a whitewash.

Eleven-year-old Charlie Burley won on his first appearance in the Basil Roden Friday Night League. He beat ex-county player Barry Sweet to help Whitmore Reans A to a 4-3 victory over Whitmore Reans B.

The Wolverhampton Rileys Open produced a quality field and was won by Willenhall's Dean Stewart who beat PDC player Jay Foreman 7-5 in the final.

The Willenhall Road Sunday Morning League is looking for new teams. Call John Campbell on 07837274802.

No secret to Blues upturn

BIRMINGHAM City boss Gary Rowett insisted "there's no secret" following his side's fourth win in five matches.

David Cotterill was the match-winner for the resurgent Blues. The Welsh international winger smashed home a brilliant 20-yard free-kick to end Huddersfield's seven-match unbeaten home run.

Blues have now climbed away from relegation danger and the manager said: "There is no secret. We have just given the players a chance and a fresh start.

"We give the players confidence and we have had some continuity."

Decisive victories bring early festive gift

CHRISTMAS came early for Wolverhampton AA VDE skipper Paul Turner when he continued his run of good form to celebrate two decisive angling victories.

The Wolverhampton-based carpenter first landed the Stoke City DAA open event held on the Shropshire Union Canal at Grubb Street in Norbury Junction with a 5-10-3 all-gudgeon catch, taken on poled squatt and pinkie over groundbait at peg 11.

Dave McCall (Shakespeare Superteam) and Digger Conway (Armitage) followed with like-fish for 2-9-7 and 2-7-10 respectively.

Turner's next triumph came at the 22-peg Wolverhampton AA open match staged on the Staffs & Worcs Canal where he commanded the lead on peg 1, with a superb 17-8-8 net of quality roach to 8oz, snared initially on poled bread fished down the track, then poled caster against a moored boat.

Four Ashes AC captain Mel Wood was runner-up, on peg 16 in the bay near the Moat House, having scaled 5-14-5 of pinkie-tempted gudgeon, ahead of Brownhills-rod Dave Holbrook, who weighed in 5-6-8 of bread and caster-roach from peg 22.

Tough, wintry conditions produced a close contest for the Goodyear AC members on the Staffs & Worcs Canal in Coven during their Sunday encounter, where Mick Round clinched the win on peg 6 with a 1-10-12 net of gudgeon and roach to pole-fished pinkie and bread punch. Choosing the same technique on neighbouring pegs 7 and 8, Johnny Benness and Ray Bates followed with similar quarries of 1-3-5 and 1-2-5 respectively. The F1s were once again prevalent at King's Pools in Shareshill. The Big Match Pool was partly frozen during the Wednesday Affordable where the Kings' men reigned supreme, filling the top three slots. Keith Williams eased to victory on peg 65, scooping out 19 F1s to poled double pinkie fished well-out for 31-12-0.

Silvers

Just one ounce decided the outcome for the next two competitors and Dave Mortlock edged it with all maggot-tempted silvers for 19-3-0 at peg 37, pipping Dave Powell into third on peg 8, with 13 F1s and a brace of ide for 19-2-0.

Anglers had to break the ice on the Carp Pool before sport could commence at a Saturday open where seasoned campaigner Terry Edwards (Swan Elite) won by a clear margin with 31-8-0 of pellet-tempted F1s to 10oz at peg 18. Jordan Hall (Maver Midlands/Bag'em Baits) also poled pellet on adjacent peg 19, scaling a plethora of F1s to 6oz for 22-8-0, ahead of Kings' man Keith Williams who finished third with 16-0-0 of pinkie-caught F1s and silvers to 2lb.

Hall then raised his game at Sunday's open staged on the icy Carp and New Match Pools to take the match with a 31-0-0 net of F1s to 10oz taken on the maggot feeder, from Carp peg 16. Woodend's Dave Doughty poled pellet short on New Match peg 15 for second with 26-6-0 of F1s in the 2½lb bracket, nudging Matty Stockton (Maver Midlands) into third with slightly smaller fish to 2lb collected on poled pinkie for 25-12-0 at New Match peg 17.

Ideye: Albion had game won

RECORD signing Brown Ideye claims "over-confidence" was to blame as Albion threw away a 2-0 lead to lose at QPR.

The Baggies were beaten 3-2 despite first goals for the club for Joleon Lescott and Silvestre Varela.

And Ideye, who started for the second successive game, believes Alan Irvine's men got carried away with their first-half lead.

"We are very disappointed about the result," said Ideye. "We really had the game won in the first half.

"We had the pattern and I guess we were over-confident in thinking that we already won the game."

SPORT

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Geddes goes global with wonder strike
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Packing a punch
Quiet man Khan shows that fighting spirit
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Visitors turn the contest around

Wednesbury RUFC 19
Burntwood 21

IN an archetypal game of two halves, Wednesbury dominated the opener, notching up three tries to Burntwood's solitary penalty.

It took Wednesbury just four minutes to break the deadlock as Mitch Grealey hacked on a loose ball then outstripped the Burntwood defence to go over under the posts. Tom Huggins converted.

The second score came courtesy of Dale Doughty before Burntwood's reply. A penalty try, again converted by Huggins added to the advantage.

At the start of the second half Wednesbury took their foot off the gas and Burntwood took full advantage. They kicked a penalty after seven minutes and an unconverted try five minutes later.

Wednesbury battled hard to get back into the game but Burntwood held solid. With just ten minutes remaining they got a break away try but missed the conversion which would have given them the lead. But deep into injury time they were awarded a penalty which they converted to give them the game.

Wednesbury's next game will be on January 10 at Clee Hill, kick off 2.15pm.

Hosts hold off spirited second half fightback

Ian Bradshaw on his 300th game for Walsall

Walsall 33 Earlsdon 20

Rugby

WALSALL managed to withstand a strong second half fightback by Earlsdon and go on to secure a bonus point victory over their Warwickshire opponents.

The visitors opened the scoring with a Scott penalty after the Walsall defence had drifted offside. It was, however, the hosts that set the pace for the rest of the half.

They took the lead after Naylor, Crowhurst and Fearnhead had exchanged passes before Halbert made a strong burst. The Walsall captain found Simon Weaver in support. The prop forward found an impressive turn of foot to run in a try from 20 metres. Five minutes later a Pittaway quickly taken penalty resulted in fly half Mould placing a well-judged cross field kick into the hands of Paul Naylor. The Walsall full back sauntered over from 25 metres with Jack Crowhurst converting both tries.

It was then the turn of the Walsall scrum to rumble forward with No 8 Dickson timing his pickup perfectly before forcing his way over the tryline. This time Roger Weston added the conversion. The final try of the half was created off a good drive from a lineout with flanker Hickman getting the touchdown to make it 26 – 3 at the interval.

The first 15 minutes of the second half saw Earlsdon make a remarkable comeback and they were rewarded with three tries.

Flanker Gittings scored twice and centre Freemantle got their other score. Scott's conversion closed the gap to just six points.

The hosts regained control of the game but only scored one more try. Naylor got his second after Mould and Weston had linked together well.

Aldridge pile on pressure

Aldridge 57 Whittington 5 – Midlands 5 West (North)

ALDRIDGE finished off the first half of their league programme with this comprehensive victory over strugglers Whittington.

The home side's forwards took the ascendancy early on which they maintained throughout. The stream of possession that this provided was shovelled out to allow their backs plenty of opportunities to put the visitors' defence to the test. It held for just seven minutes before hooker Lea Ross opened the scoring.

As Aldridge piled on the pressure, further tries followed from flanker Ben Pittam, centre Dan McKenna, full-back Alex Yates and prop Alex Reed. Yates converted three to make it 31-0 at the break.

Whittington finally managed to briefly reverse the trend with a consolation try late in the second half when scrum–half James Crawford squeezed over.

Yates and McKenna posted their second touchdowns and further tries came from lock Dan Laston and winger Ashley Lowe. Yates converted three.

BRADSHAW SHARP TO BLUNT BLADES

Sheffield United 1 Walsall 1

IT was a solid start to a big week as Walsall returned from Bramall Lane content with a point but not without frustrations.

It was not an easy afternoon for boss Dean Smith to sum up after initially voicing disappointment with aspects of his team's display.

Football

He later took a step back to take into account the strength of opposition.

But Smith's instinct to be critical shows just how he and his team now approach games against the likes of Sheffield United.

A trip to Bramall Lane is viewed as a chance for three points against promotion rivals but if the Saddlers are to reach where they believe they could be this season, at some stage they are going to have to show a bit more.

Response

They had barely laid a glove on the hosts by the time Chris O'Grady fired the Blades into a 56th minute lead. But Walsall's response was impressive and swift, with Tom Bradshaw heading home his 11th goal of the season.

The result extended the Saddlers' unbeaten league run to seven games, yet there was still the nagging sense we didn't really learn anything particularly new.

They again proved their ability to compete with the Blades, though Smith was less than impressed by the easy way in which they lose possession at times. Chief culprit was James Baxendale, who gave the ball away one fatal, final time in the build-up to O'Grady's goal before being substituted. His replacement, Anthony Forde, again injected some life into the Saddlers' forward play.

Defensively they were again excellent, barely giving the hosts a sniff before Jose Baxter sent O'Grady clear and even then, there was suggestion the striker was offside. Then there is Bradshaw, who has accrued his 11 goals in just 18 appearances.

The most notable first half incident looked set to be an injury to the referee Graham Horwood which forced him off until Baxter provided some drama in stoppage time when his drive deflected off Michael Cain and onto the bar.

Chances were still at a premium when O'Grady pounced but that only served to kick-start the Saddlers. Home fans' boos at the end final whistle from home fans gave a clear indication at who was happiest with the result. But this was only another solid step on the road for the Saddlers in their search for the spectacular.

Top scorer Tom Bradshaw moves in on the Blades' goal as Walsall carve out a chance

Saddlers full of confidence

SADDLERS top scorer Tom Bradshaw reckons Walsall had nothing to fear ahead of a festive double header against Swindon and MK Dons.

Third-placed Robins were visiting the Banks's on Boxing Day before the Saddlers travel to Milton Keynes 48 hours later.

But, with Dean Smith's side unbeaten in seven games, Bradshaw said they were heading into the games full of confidence.

"We have every confidence in ourselves," Bradshaw said. "Why can't we pick up six points from the next two games? It is perfectly achievable."

Bradshaw netted his 11th goal of the season in Saturday's 1-1 draw with Sheffield United which kept the Saddlers impressive run going.

"I think it ended up being a good point," he said.

Match is halted after bad injury

Rushall 1 Frickley 1

A BAD injury to debutant Sam Brooks forced this Evo-Stik Premier match to be abandoned after 84 minutes. The match will be replayed.

Pics had been down to 10 men after Mitchell Tolley received two yellow cards. On target were Pics' Aaron Brown and Frickley captain Matty Bloor.

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